We Will Move Mountains

The Story of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College

We Will Move Mountains

The story of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College is inextricably entwined with the history and growth of Asheville and Buncombe County. Evolving from a few structures on the site of what was once the Township of Victoria, there are now 22 buildings on the main campus and more than 26,000 students enrolled in diploma, degree, and continuing education courses. It is a story of change and positive outcomes for individuals and this region of Western North Carolina.

In 1959, when A-B Tech began as the Asheville Industrial Education Center, it was, as it is today, dedicated to student success. By providing an alternative to a four-year college, the school would train high school students, graduates, and adults seeking new skills, allowing the burgeoning industries of the region to benefit from a diverse and ready workforce. In those early years, the school would begin its legacy of changing lives, pioneering innovative curriculum programs, and shifting the landscape of education for the region.

The nearly half-century history of A-B Tech is replete with success stories: of three leaders who shared a common goal, of students who wrote

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We Will Move Mountains

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The Story of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College

Kimberly Fox DeMeza

The restored colonnade at the entrance to Fernihurst, one of the original structures on the college campus, frames the Blue Ridge Mountains nearly 15 miles southeast of Asheville.

Give us your tired, your poor,
your employed
and unemployed
and underemployed.
your first-generation college students,
your people with disabilities,
your academically underprepared.
Give us your
gifted but poorly motivated,
your motivated but poorly gifted.
Give us your people in need of
an even chance,
a second chance,
a last chance.
Give us all these people—and we will move mountains
to provide them with both a place
and an opportunity
to succeed.

—Kay McClenney
Senior Lecturer, Community College Leadership Program

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Foreword

Ten years before the publication of this book, the board of trustees of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College adopted a mission statement that begins "A-B Tech, the community's college, is dedicated to student success."

Except for several name changes over the years, that mission statement would have been as fitting when we were founded in 1959 as it is today. Programs, facilities, faces—and yes, fashions—have changed. The commitment this institution has made to its students, however, has been unwavering.

A-B Tech has always been about changing people's lives—from those early days, when we were known as the Asheville Industrial Education Center, providing high school students and adults with skills for vocational careers, to today, when our mission includes not only preparing students for fulfilling careers, but laying the groundwork for those who decide to continue their education beyond a two-year degree.

The story of our college is a story of its people—students, faculty and staff, administrators, and board members. It is a story that reminds us of what can be achieved through a combination of hope, heart, and more than a little hard work. It is a story I am proud to have had a part in writing and one I look forward to seeing continue to unfold.

As you read these pages, I hope you enjoy reliving our story as much as I have.

K. Ray Bailey
President

The gentle valleys and mountain peaks of the Blue Ridge provide a wondrous backyard for the students of A-B Tech and the citizens of Asheville. Part of the Appalachian range, the Blue Ridge Mountains are among the oldest on earth.

Introduction

As the shafts of sunlight edge up over the Blue Ridge Mountains in the distance, automobiles are already on the roadway that has crossed this hill since the 1820s. Steadily making their way, they carry members of the A-B Tech community: students thinking about the day as well as their greater opportunities when the coursework is over, faculty anticipating the satisfaction of interacting with and encouraging those students, and staff who know their contributions are essential to keeping the mechanism growing and operating smoothly. All who are a part of this community are valued members of a welcoming place that manifests mutual respect and an invitation to be part of something special.

The mission of community colleges throughout North Carolina is similar. But on the campus that is spread across the top of a historic hill in Asheville, students have chosen a college that is dedicated to their success.

The story of the birth of a vision begins long before the closing years of the 1950s when plans were being made to create and deliver diversified educational programs to support the skilled workforce for the state's growing industrial economy. The story really begins in the late nineteenth century on that same road that crosses the main campus today.

Victoria Road circa 1890. The well-traveled road was part of the Buncombe Turnpike, which ran 75 miles from border to border, from Tennessee to South Carolina.

Photo Courtesy of Shirley McLaughlin

James McConnell Smith purchased 126 acres from his father, Daniel Smith, for $1,000 and an additional 465 acres from his brother, Moses Smith, for $5,000 and built his home in the 1840s. A successful businessman, during his lifetime Smith operated a ferry across the French Broad River, built a toll bridge, owned the Buck Hotel and a tannery, and served as mayor of Asheville in 1849.

Photo Courtesy of Shirley McLaughlin

Photos Courtesy of Shirley McLaughlin

Colonel John Kerr Connally and wife, Alice Thomas Connally (pictured), of Richmond, Virginia, purchased a portion of the Smith-McDowell property from William Wallace McDowell and Sarah Lucinda Smith McDowell (daughter of James McConnell Smith) to build their home, Fernihurst. The Smith and McDowell graves were moved from the top of the knoll to permit construction of the house.

As with the development of any county in any state, the initial orders of civic business are to build the infrastructure to support and promote growth. By 1827, some 35 years after Buncombe County was formed, a vital thoroughfare ran from the edge of one state line to another. From Paint Rock near Tennessee, to Saluda Gap bordering South Carolina, the Buncombe Turnpike carried travelers, mail, and livestock, paralleling the course of the French Broad River and rumbling through Asheville, dipping south on what is now Victoria Road before crossing the Swannanoa River and continuing eastward. Those who took the Buncombe Turnpike did so with the same sense of personal and economic purpose as students on the road today in search of growth and opportunity.

The setting of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College today spans 144 hilly acres. From atop the highest elevation on campus, just a few hundred footsteps from the Mountain Tech Lodge, you can almost see George W. Vanderbilt's Biltmore Estate. Beyond it is Mount Pisgah, the highest mountain in this part of the Blue Ridge Range. Running along the

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mayor o

Photo Courtesy of Shirley

From pony rides for the children to posh parties for prominent citizens, Fernihurst in the 1880s was known as a center of social activity in the township of Victoria and the city of Asheville. Over the years, and through several owners, Fernihurst expanded to more than 50 rooms.

south of the campus is the confluence of the Swannanoa and French Broad rivers.

This area's beauty, its close reach to water, and its prominence on the horizon were what drew the early settlers, and later, affluent citizens. "The history of this region is centered here," explains Shirley McLaughlin, a librarian by profession and historian by passion. McLaughlin is most remembered for her leadership of the college library across three decades. From her first days at A-B Tech in 1969, the history of the property and its historic homes fascinated her. Always interested in perpetuating the history of the college, McLaughlin later created a display of the early Township of Victoria as a mural in the Learning Resources Center.

One of the homes depicted—the Smith-McDowell House—is on Victoria Road. Built around 1840 by James McConnell Smith, the home is the oldest existing brick residence in Asheville.

In 1876, John Kerr Connally and wife, Alice Thomas Connally, of Richmond, Virginia, built a home on 30 acres of the Smith-McDowell property they purchased the year before from Smith's daughter, Sarah Smith McDowell. Situated at the top of a knoll, Fernihurst soon became the center of social activity for the Township of Victoria and the City of Asheville. Fittingly, now-renovated Fernihurst serves as a fine dining facility as part of A-B Tech's hospitality education complex.

A-B Tech's link to Vanderbilt reveals itself in another historic structure—Sunnicrest. The Tudoresque home is one of five villas Vanderbilt constructed in the late 1800s for his friends to use when visiting the area. While just three owners have enjoyed Sunnicrest—George Vanderbilt, C. W. Radeker, and today, A-B Tech—the home has more than served its original purpose. Sunnicrest now houses the college's human resources department.

At the turn of the century, Sunnicrest, one of the villas built by George Vanderbilt on land north of the Swannanoa River, rented for $350 monthly, and was completely furnished except for silver, linen, and blankets.

Photo Courtesy of Shirley McLaughlin

Two early students stroll along Victoria Road. The school was in its infancy at the time, and few would have dared predict the impact it would have on Western North Carolina.

The Simpson Years

Learn to Earn

By 1959, the United States had stretched its boundaries by bringing into statehood Alaska and Hawaii. North Carolina's educational system was also growing with the inception of statewide industrial education centers. Funded by the General Assembly and the National Defense Education Act of 1958, the centers were to provide an alternative to a four-year college, and more importantly, train high school students and graduates as well as adults seeking new skills in trade and vocational careers. Western North Carolina's growing industries were eager for a diverse and skilled workforce. In Asheville, the effort began in 1959 as the Trade and Industrial Vocational Education Program under the direction of Floyd P. Gerhes.

Over at the new Enka High School, in the Candler community, students in the diversified occupation program were ending their half day of school and would spend the other half at an industry job where they could apply their new skills. Their teacher, Thomas W. Simpson, had begun his career as an educator by teaching first grade, then later industrial arts at Sand Hill High School in Candler. He drew on his degree in industrial arts and mathematics from Western Carolina University for theory and his own devotion to woodworking for inspiration. His students excelled under his mild manner and his passion for advancing their lives. When Floyd Gerhes called on him to be his assistant director of the Asheville Industrial Education Center, as it was then known, Simpson didn't hesitate. "We're mountain people, and Tom was very proud of his heritage," recalls his widow Jerdie Simpson. "He viewed this as a real opportunity to help the people of Western North Carolina."

The first goals of the Industrial Education Center included bricks and mortar and an enrollment of 300–400 students. Just as important as buildings and people were to the center, so was the curriculum that would ensure that "Learn to Earn" would be more than just a motto. From the beginning, Asheville Industrial Education Center established a direction that would set a precedent for it to take the initiative to determine workforce and community needs. An advisory committee, chaired by

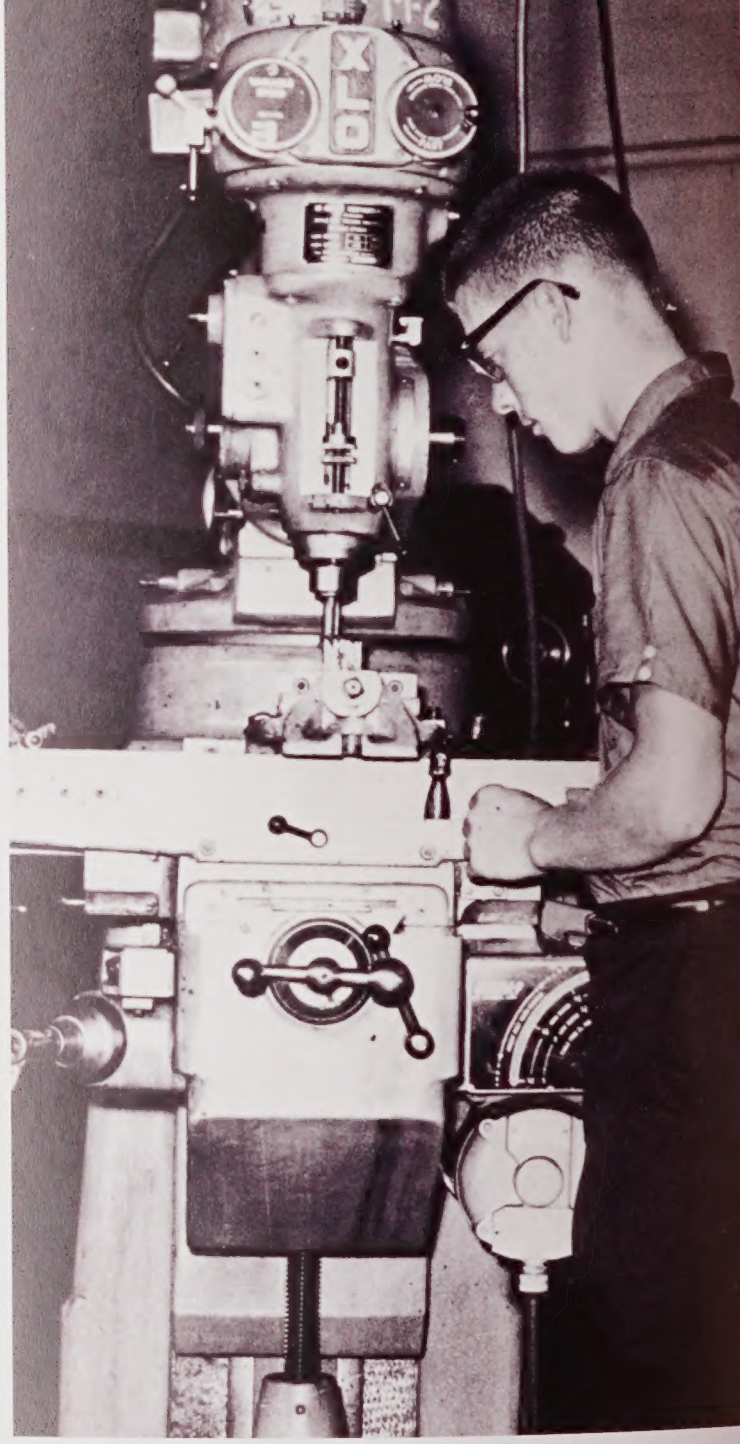
A young Tom Simpson brought his love for education, a desire to make a difference, and burgeoning leadership ability to the position of director for the Industrial Education Center.

A-B Tech President Tom Simpson felt strongly that the college's buildings should be named after trees, not people. However, after his passing, the board of trustees believed the most fitting way to honor the first president was to name the new administration building in his memory. He was known as a hands-on leader who insisted on delivering the paychecks to each staff member, always with a handshake and a thank-you for their hard work.

Lester F. Zerfoss, director of industrial relations and management services for American Enka Corporation, assessed the training needs of the area, built community support, and advised school administrators about the program. The *Asheville Citizen* reported, "Everyone concerned agreed that this glove-tight working relationship between the people who do the job training and the people who do the hiring was a key to the Asheville-Buncombe Center's fine record." It was becoming abundantly clear that the Industrial Center would be a catalyst for the economic development of Western North Carolina.

As the decade of the 1950s rolled over to the spirited '60s, the world was shifting in many amazing ways. IBM's enormous mainframe computers changed the methods for processing information, and jet airliner service shortened time and distance between continents. In a tiny office on the eighth floor of Asheville's city hall, Tom Simpson, who had become director of the Industrial Center after the resignation of Floyd Gerhes, was optimistic. The signs of early progress were beginning to emerge. The first two buildings on Victoria Road were under construction so that soon the center's debut programs—machine shop and

A city known for its mélange of art galleries, restaurants, and history, Asheville also boasts an outstanding quality of life, due in part to excellent health-care and educational facilities. A-B Tech's curriculum programs produce work-ready graduates.



Machining was one of the original programs offered through the Industrial Education Center. Some of the machine shop equipment came to the school through a federal government program to safely house equipment vital to the nation. During this Cold War period, reserving equipment in various locations throughout the country was necessary in the event of attack. Facilities like the Industrial Education Center were ideal.

basic electronics technology—could be moved from their location at Lee Edwards High School to their own campus. Jane Smith, the first employee hired under Floyd Gehres, remembers: "The state's education director, Wade Martin, kept saying 'think big' to our original trustees. Mr. Gerhes felt this educational venture was simply too risky, but Tom Simpson did not. We all thought the two buildings and the $300,000 it took to build them was thinking pretty big. Response was so great that soon we realized that we didn't think big enough. In a very short time, we needed a third building."

Thomas W. Simpson: A Man to Match Our Mountains

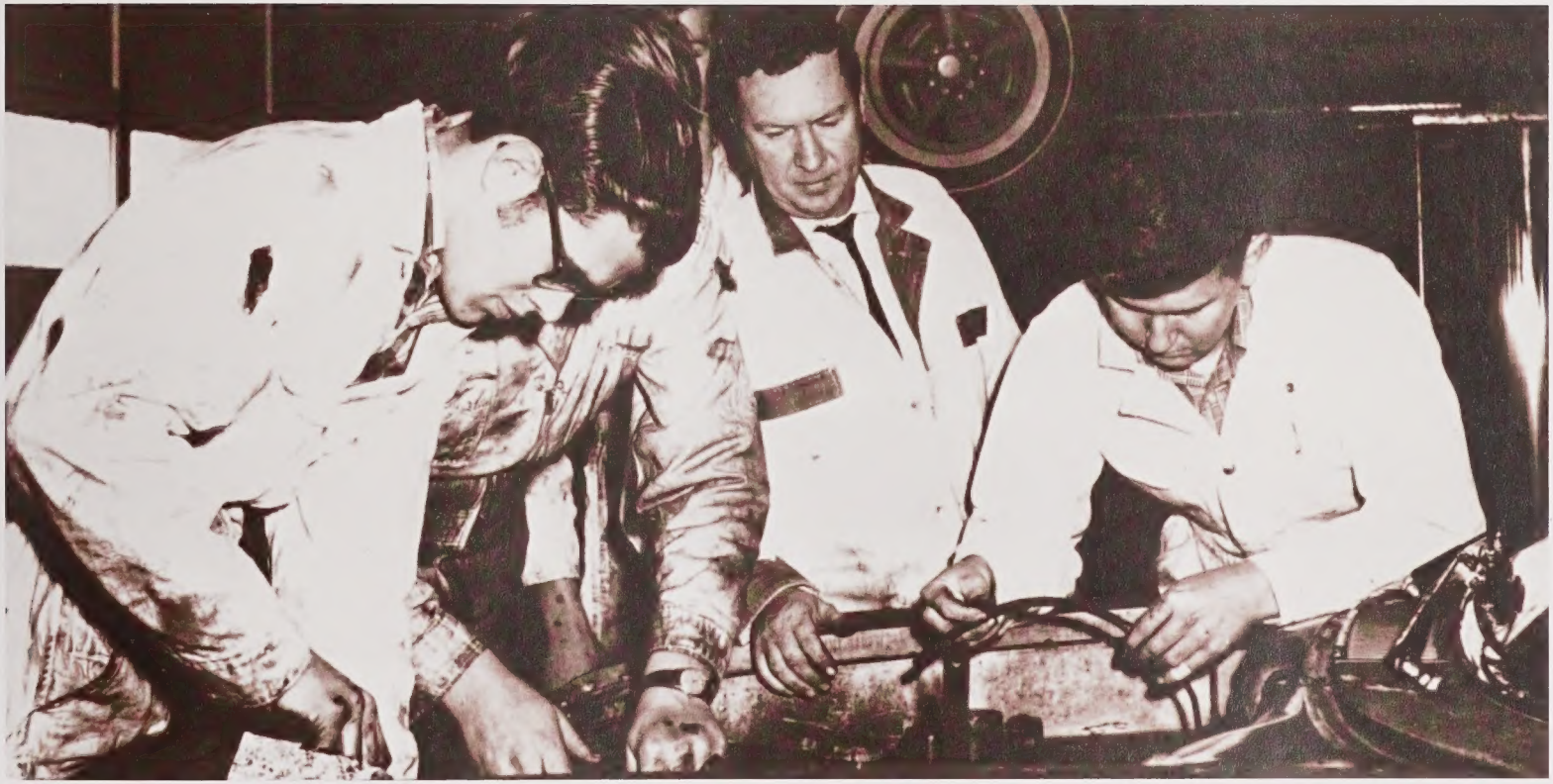
The sheet of paper is softly wrinkled and shows its age. On it are the enumerated philosophies of Thomas W. Simpson, A-B Tech's first president, and in many people's view, its architect. So fitting of the man was his seventh philosophy: "There are two ways to be a leader. One is to be progressive and exert qualities of greatness that others will want to follow. The other is to find out which way everyone is going and get in front of them." Simpson's widow Jerdie smiles and says, "Oh, *that's* typical."

While everyone agrees that Tom Simpson led by supporting the actions and directions of his team, they also say he was indeed a man of progress and greatness, and as such, was easy to follow. "His goals were high, and there were no other schools to follow as a guide, so they paved their own way," says Jerdie. "He would be pleased that his dream is as big as it is today."

The Tom Simpson who began to shape the dream was quiet, unassuming, and a doer. A WLOS-TV editorial tribute following his death in 1975 described him as "a man to match our mountains." His love of family echoed that of many generations of mountain people, as did his affinity for nature. His kinetic work ethic had its roots in his skills in working with his hands, as shown in his wood carvings and furniture in Jerdie's home today. His perpetual optimism was contagious. "In the early days on the job, he would come home and say that things went really well today, and that believe it or not, everything fell into place just as planned," says Jerdie. Tom Simpson, the man who laid a rock-solid foundation for the institution's present position of prominence, had a gift for making things happen.

Originally a trade course, drafting was one of the first programs. In the early 1960s, students were using drafting boards with attached drafting machines to create drawings. In 1984, computer-aided drafting (CAD) was added. Graduates have worked in every major industry in Western North Carolina.

By September 1961, a neatly lettered, clearly visible triangular signboard stood at 340 Victoria Road: "Learn to Earn. Asheville Industrial Education Center" seemed to both invite and challenge the citizens of the county. Administrative offices shared Building A with students in classrooms as well as laboratories for drafting and design, chemistry, physics, and instrumentation. In Building B, an automotive shop, machine shop, electronics laboratory, and air conditioning, refrigeration, and sheet metal shops stayed noisy and busy. More than a half-million dollars in equipment gave students the right



The commencement program for the 1963 graduating class lists 11 automotive technology students. As one of the early technical education programs, automotive technology required hands-on instruction and participation. Sophisticated diagnostic technology has augmented the process today, but instructors still plant bugs that cause engine failure, and students have to diagnose problems by troubleshooting the old-fashioned way. Charlie Noblitt, now retired, is the instructor shown here in the center.

tools to learn the right skills. The Industrial Education Center machine was working smoothly.

Almost two years later, on a summer evening in late August 1963, a soloist sang "You'll Never Walk Alone" to the more than 80 graduates of Asheville Industrial Education Center in a commencement ceremony held in the auditorium at Lee H. Edwards High School. The new drafters, welders, machinists, automotive mechanics, electronics technicians, and air conditioning and refrigeration technicians heard Tom Simpson's address. Jane Smith recalls the significance of that milestone.

In the 1970s, chemistry courses at A-B Tech were part of the chemical engineering technology program under Robert Morrell, chairman. The lab was in Azalea, the first classroom/administration building, before it became the student services center. Chemistry later moved to the Elm Building and became part of the curriculum for transfer students.

"Those first graduates contributed to the growth of our school," she says. "Mr. Simpson looked out at those students and said, 'We've done our best with you, and we're sending you on. How you perform on the job will have great influence on those who come after you.'"

Carl Cowan was listening to Simpson's words on that summer evening. As one of the first graduates of the electronics program, Cowan already had on-the-job experience, through the Industrial Education Center's relationship with area industries. "The center worked with local employers to provide part-time employment for students in the field they were studying. In my second year of the program, I was already working for American Enka Corporation in the electronics shop," Cowan says. Upon graduation, Cowan joined American Enka full-time for a short period before moving to Southern Bell, where he worked as an electronics technician until his retirement in 2000. From the first graduating class, A-B Tech began to build its reputation as the foundation for student success.

Jane Smith, the first employee hired at the Industrial Education Center, remembers the camaraderie and belief in the mission. "It was like a second family to me," she says. In the early years, Smith initially shared a telephone with another secretary. One of the instructors in the machine shop made a swiveling stand for the phone, so that the two could share efficiently. Smith recalls that many of the instructors were resourceful and made their own equipment, such as meters for the electronics program.

Cowan had come to the Industrial Education Center because his neighbor, electronics instructor Steve Creasman, pointed out the breadth of the program. "The training was quite extensive. We got into power supply design, vacuum tubes, and formulas to figure currents and voltages. We also branched out into other classes. I remember taking physics and working in the sheet metal shop designing our own chassis. We even took a speed-reading course," he recalls. To learn soldering skills, the students would solder number-12-gauge copper wire to build a pyramid. The

Licensed Practical Nursing was one of the first programs at the Industrial Education Center. First located at St. Joseph's Hospital, the classes moved to the campus on Victoria Road in the early 1970s when the Rhododendron Building was constructed to accommodate increasing demands for allied health programs.

soldered joints had to be strong enough to withstand instructor Creasman's visual and physical scrutiny. "He would attach a string to the top and pull. If it stayed together, it was soldered properly. It was both a lesson and a test of our soldering skills," he says. Cowan still uses many of the practical skills he learned, as well as the less tangible skills instructors like Steve Creasman taught him about being a productive member of society.

On that same evening in 1963, Dodie Sparacino was still enjoying the remaining lazy days of summer. In the fall, she would begin her senior year at Asheville Catholic High School, a facility adjacent to the Industrial Education Center that had opened about the same time. She had thought she might want a career as a teacher. However, by the end of her senior year in 1964, a different future came into sharp focus, as she realized that her position as the eldest of six made it financially prohibitive for her to go off to college. "One of the nuns offered me a scholarship for practical nursing at St. Joseph's Hospital. During that time, the practical nursing program shifted to A-B Tech, and thus I ended up a graduate of their program in 1965," she says. What she remembers most, however, was returning to A-B Tech for an

Learning Resources Center

A young woman sits at a table in the Learning Resources Center, books spread in front of her. She is concentrating, as so many students have done before her, poring through materials for a research paper. The clicking of her laptop keyboard is barely noticeable to those around her as she searches online resources through a wireless connection.

The Learning Resources Center today is light years beyond the converted office closet known in 1964 as Room A-3. In 1969, the library received a new home and a new leader. Straight out of graduate school, Shirley McLaughlin was up for the challenge. "This looked like the kind of place where I could make a difference," she says. And she made that difference for 36 years.

Originally in the Birch Building (formerly Building D), the library was approximately the size of two classrooms and held about 6,000 books. The learning resources concept—the merger of media and library—was in its infancy. McLaughlin worked to build a full-scale library by acquiring and cataloging materials. By 1978, the learning resources concept was fully implemented, and the growth of the library created a need for a new building, one that at first seemed to be away from most student activity. "Instead, it turned out to be an ideal location in the center of what would become a significant expansion and a prominent element of the streetscape," McLaughlin adds.

In the late 1990s, the college found the way to showcase the library's advanced technology. When the Internet connectivity switch was flipped, the Learning Resources Center hosted a public event to roll out NC LIVE—the state's online library. In the spirit of the words so often heard from President Bailey: "If it's really important to do, we find a way to do it." And A-B Tech did it.

From the beginning, the college collaborated with local industries, such as American Enka Corporation, to determine workforce training needs. Students often gained hands-on experience by working for the businesses prior to graduation. The welding instructor pictured is Stans Sluder (third from right).

associate's degree in nursing. "I was recently divorced with two small children and often wondered just how I would get through it. Dot Aycock, one of my instructors, knew I was overwhelmed," she says. "She'd take the time to sit down with me, which was a tremendous gift because I didn't feel I had the time to step back, look at myself, and try to get control of the situation."

Today, Dodie Sparacino King owns one of the largest franchises of Interim Healthcare, a provider of home care and medical staffing. What she loves most about nursing, she still puts into practice: hands-on care with patients. And what she came to admire about A-B Tech, she still believes in: the excellence of the nursing programs. "Almost all of our nursing class passed the boards. We were prepared," she reflects. "And A-B Tech doesn't just stop at the educational component. They also provide great leadership in our community."

Preparing nurses to be effective members of health-care teams remains both a conviction and a strength of A-B Tech today, as Asheville is the health-care epicenter of Western North

In a graduation address in the 1960s, Edwin Gill, then state treasurer, once described the students as individual bricks in the wall of the community, and the college instructors as those who have a mission in building the strongest wall that will stand for years to come. The early graduates of A-B Tech helped establish its reputation for student success.

Carolina. The original practical nursing program now falls under the Division of Allied Health and Public Service Education. In addition, the college has an associate's degree in nursing program that averages 90 graduates a year. Students who wish to matriculate can enroll at Western Carolina University for bachelor's and master's degrees at A-B Tech's Enka campus.

A Legacy of Leadership

Leadership is a characteristic of A-B Tech that emerged early on. One indication came in 1961 when the governor of South Carolina recognized the success of Asheville's Industrial Education Center. Impressed with the facility and the program, the governor tapped Harvey Haynes, who was then the center's counselor/coordinator, to become the director of the Greenville Technical Education Center, the first school of its kind in South Carolina. After Haynes led the Greenville school from construction to full operations, he returned to his "home school." Two years later, in 1963, the Industrial Education Center established four satellite schools in Western North Carolina. These schools would eventually become the fully accredited community colleges of Tri-County Community

When Harvey Lee Haynes, a native of Weaverville, North Carolina, was hired as counselor/coordinator for the Industrial Education Center, he couldn't imagine that in 1975 he would assume the role as president after the death of Tom Simpson. The Asheville Citizen *called Haynes an expert in technical education who "probably knows more about technical education than any man in the two Carolinas. He literally wrote the book on it."*

College in Murphy, Haywood Community College in Clyde, Southwestern Community College in Sylva, and McDowell Technical Community College in Marion. That same year, the North Carolina General Assembly enacted legislation that not only resulted in a name change to Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute, but also enabled the college to confer the associate's in applied science degree for the first time at graduation ceremonies in August 1964.

Other signs of growth and leadership were also visible. By June 1963, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute had earned autonomy, as the Asheville City Board of Education transferred administrative jurisdiction to a local board of trustees that would set policy for the new technical school. Building C was completed late in the year, and plans were already being drawn for a fourth, which would house the region's first on-campus hotel-motel complex.

Western North Carolina was experiencing change as well. The allure of the mountains was becoming even more appealing to travelers in the mid-1960s. The brilliant yellows, golds, and reds of the mountains in the fall attracted increasing numbers of visitors. The spring rhododendron blossoms and mountain laurel pulled them to the Blue Ridge Parkway, and in summer, out-of-staters found respite in the cooler, invigorating mountain air. Year-round, local craftsmen carved, painted, sketched, and sewed creations that resonated as mountain products. Tourism was becoming a pivotal industry for the region. A-B Tech, true to its responsibility to meet the needs of the community, responded by developing the hotel-motel food service administration curriculum. The first of its kind in North Carolina, the program taught students all aspects of the travel industry. And with a unique 14-room motel wing as a part of Building D, students put theory into practice by maintaining the rooms and providing guest services.

An addition to the Azalea Building will bring all intake student services —from admissions to finance—under one roof. A-B Tech enrolls more than 26,000 students and offers more than 50 career programs, a college transfer program, and more than 1,200 continuing education courses.

Pioneering programs demand top-of-the line facilities, and since its inception, A-B Tech has made sure faculty and students have what they need to teach and to learn. The Magnolia Building, opened in 2006, houses four state-of-the-art kitchens, a 150-person banquet hall, a private dining room, a demonstration hall that seats 120, an ice-carving deck, and the seven-room Mountain Tech Lodge. The building space includes the three programs under hospitality education: the nationally recognized culinary technology program, baking and pastry arts, and hotel and restaurant management.

The new Mountain Tech Lodge, which opened in 2006 in the Magnolia Building, features seven spacious rooms, all still student-maintained under faculty supervision. And although the curriculum is now called hotel and restaurant management, and students can earn an associate's in applied science degree, a bed and breakfast/ inn management certificate, and a hospitality management certificate, the fundamentals established in the 1960s remain. Students learn laundering techniques and the

practice of proper sanitation, cooking, and management of food and beverage inventories. Menu design, computer concepts, front-office functions and reservations, even marketing—every element essential for a supervisory and managerial career in the hotel and restaurant management industry—is included. Even something as basic as food preparation has value for future hotel or restaurant managers. "With a food prep course, our students will know how to evaluate a chef they may want to hire," explains Sheila Tillman, department chair of hospitality education. Phil Cordell, senior vice president of Hampton Inn Brand Management and a 1983 graduate of the program, agrees. Because of his training at A-B Tech, he could apply his skills immediately. "The combination of theory and practical application let me jump right into management," Cordell says.

The complement to hotel and restaurant management is the culinary program. Known as culinary science in its infancy at A-B Tech in 1967, the program has produced exceptional chefs who now run the kitchens in restaurants across the country. Many believe that Asheville's present reputation as "a city with great food" is because of its hometown incubator for culinary talent—A-B Tech.

Today, in one of the four complete kitchens of the 39,000-square-foot Magnolia Building, a pastry class is operating. Students in traditional chef's jacket and checked pants, topped by the pleated chef's hat, are concentrating on creating European

The buildings on the Victoria Road campus of A-B Tech are enhanced by the beauty of the indigenous trees and shrubs from which they take their name. Each season graces the buildings with different looks, but perhaps the most vibrant season is fall.

Instructors in the culinary program, like those in other A-B Tech courses, bring real-world experience to the classroom and the kitchen. Chef Robert Werth (below right), the program's first chef-instructor, was a member of the American Culinary Federation, the American Academy of Chefs, and the Sommelier Society of America. He helped design and teach the courses of the seven-quarter curriculum that culminated in a culinary science program degree.

cakes and tortes. One student reaches into his toolbox for an unexpected implement—a construction trowel that will allow him to sculpt clean lines in the icing to add a unique dimension. The instructor smiles when he explains that the big-box home improvement store is a favorite site for utensils. He's not kidding; another chef-in-training is creating a pattern on sponge cake with pierced metal usually used to cover rain gutters on homes. He lays the piece of guttering on top of a sponge cake, applies food coloring across the material, and removes it, revealing the polka-dot pattern beneath. "Culinary students are generally very creative and resourceful types," remarks Tillman.

The Magnolia facilities give students many opportunities to express their creativity. "We have every major piece of equipment that a student will see in the industry," says Tillman. "There's even an ice maker capable of producing a three-hundred-pound block of ice so they can learn ice carving in *garde manger*, the cold food course." A special freezer holds the ice; a deck for carving is situated so that all students can see the presentation.

In an advanced baking class, culinary technology students learn that with pastry, presentation is as important as taste. Flourishes created from chocolate on this torte are designed to enhance the appeal to all the senses.

Harvey Haynes served A-B Tech for thirty years, first as counselor-coordinator, then as dean of instruction and its second president. During his tenure, he is credited with bringing 72 industries to Western North Carolina, an achievement that fills him with pride. "When you land a major industry, you know you are creating jobs," he says.

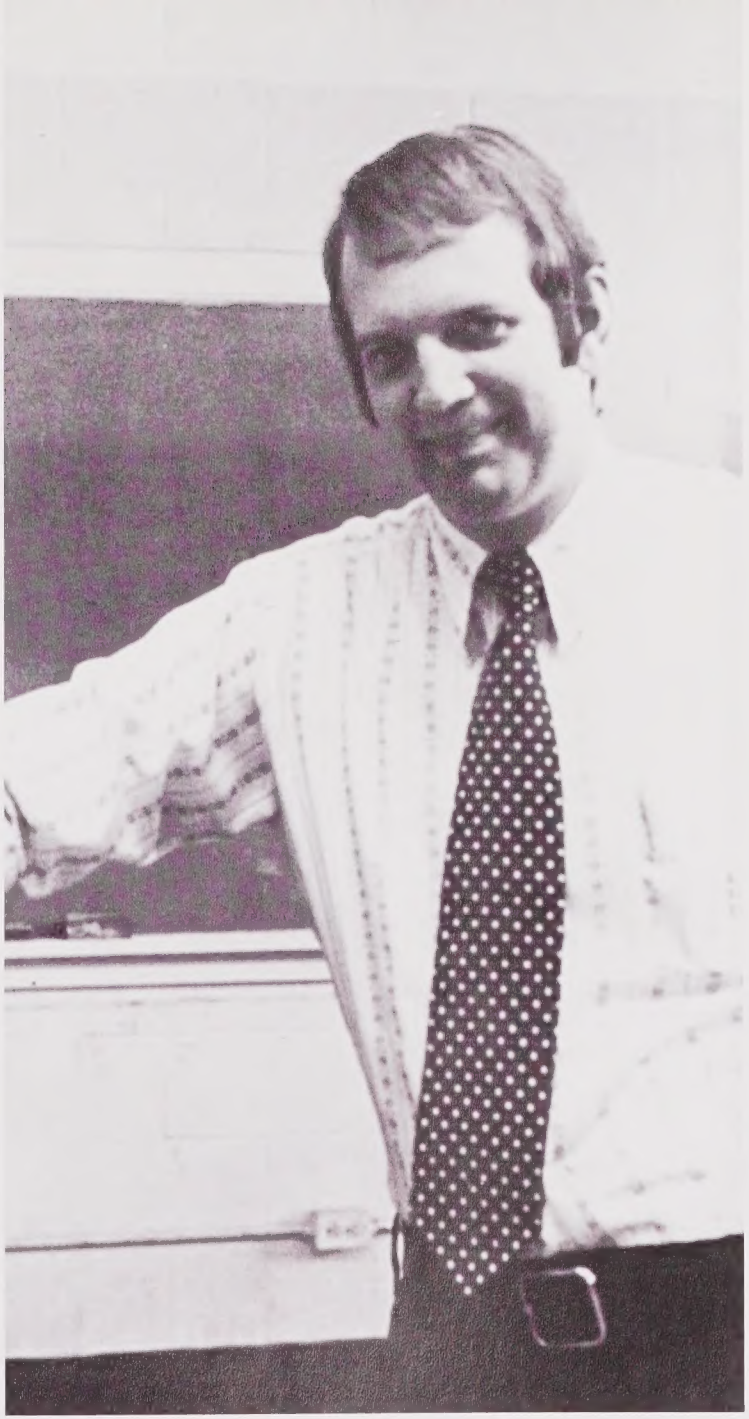
Gaining a Position of Respect

Tom Simpson made many excellent hires. With two in particular—Harvey L. Haynes and K. Ray Bailey—it would later seem that Simpson was clairvoyant. A wizard at matching the person to the position, he knew he'd found in Harvey Haynes, who had five years' experience in engineering at the General Electric Corporation in Hendersonville, the perfect man for the counselor-coordinator position at the new Industrial Center. A graduate of Western Carolina University with a double major in business education and industrial arts, Haynes also taught evening classes in tool and die, drafting, geometry, and basic blueprint reading. His "night job" aroused his latent interest in education. In February 1961, Haynes came to work at the Industrial Center and set about the task that would be a fundamental element of his legacy: curriculum development. His addition took the team of Simpson and secretary Jane Smith from a pair to a trio, and the three synchronized beautifully, with one exception. "There were only two offices in our space in city hall," Haynes says. "Jane and I shared one of those. I can remember a time when I think she had the heat turned on to about 98°," he recalls with a laugh. Fortunately for Haynes, his job required

much time out of the office, developing and overseeing curriculum in local high schools and throughout the state.

While the team at the Industrial Center was building the dream, Ray Bailey was teaching at Clyde A. Erwin High School in Asheville, unaware of the opportunities ahead at the Industrial Center—a future move that would shape not only his career, but that of A-B Tech.

In his final year at Middle Tennessee State University, Bailey took two audiovisual courses that would have a serendipitous impact on his career. "I became somewhat of an A/V guru and parlayed that into some projects for the high school where I was teaching and coaching," Bailey says. Three years later, in the spring of 1966, A-B Tech asked him to advise the school on audiovisual matters. Soon, he was working for the college part-time in the evenings, expanding their A/V capabilities. "I got a call saying that President Simpson wanted to talk with me. He told me he'd like for me to work for him, and I answered that I hadn't thought about that." But when Bailey gave it more thought and realized the opportunity, he agreed and never looked back. By August, Bailey had moved into Hillcote, a



For more than forty years, K. Ray Bailey has directed his energy to transforming the lives of students and, in many cases, restoring their confidence, ensuring every opportunity for their ultimate success.

After the Buncombe County Dental Society appointed an advisory board in 1970 to conceptualize dental hygiene and dental assisting programs at A-B Tech, the first students began classes in the fall of 1972. By 1974, all 16 original students passed the national and state board examinations and were promptly employed by the dental community.

stucco building affectionately known as "the Green House." No sooner had he begun to get his desk organized than he started shoehorning his tall frame into his little VW Beetle and traveling to the 17 western counties where he was responsible for the delivery of adult basic education programs.

The adult basic education program Bailey directed that began in 1964 remains an important component of A-B Tech's mission for student success. In the 1960s, the U.S. Census revealed that an alarming percentage of adults in North Carolina had not completed eighth grade. Adult education classes were therefore designed to improve literacy as well as basic arithmetic skills so that those needing remediation could ultimately find gainful employment. Today adult basic education continues to upgrade reading comprehension, language, and mathematics. In addition, A-B Tech offers a human resources development program that provides short-term prevocational counseling for the unemployed and the underemployed. "We're in the better-life business," Bailey says. "In many cases, we're trying to give people basic skills so they can go to work and be self-sufficient."

Another of Simpson's efforts to keep A-B Tech in the forefront of educational institutions was accreditation. As certifications often are, this first official proof of success seemed a huge and difficult task. It would become, however, one of the hallmarks of his administration. Harvey Haynes remembers the effort. "It was essential to be accredited," he explains. "Curriculum and program

development had been the thrust of the first ten years, and accreditation would be a validation of this accomplishment—a symbol recognized throughout the United States." It was a satisfying moment when students and staff gathered on December 5, 1969, to hear Simpson say, "The most significant recognition accorded Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute occurred last Wednesday when it was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools." This first accreditation was a harbinger of the coming years. In 1971, the North Carolina Board of Nursing accredited the associate's degree in nursing program; in 1973, both the dental assisting and dental hygiene curriculums were accredited by the American Dental Association; and two years later, the radiologic technology curriculum was accredited. Since then, A-B Tech has been consistently reaccredited by all key accrediting organizations.

By 1975, Tom Simpson and the dedicated staff he called "family" had skillfully guided the institute to a position of even greater respect. Students now numbered in the thousands, and curriculum programs had expanded from a handful to dozens. Local leaders praised A-B Tech for its contribution to the favorable industrial climate of Western North Carolina. New facilities were constructed, including a new administration building and a four-story paramedical building. Administrators, faculty, and staff were looking to establish benchmarks—examining what had worked well—and also looking to the community to develop a long-range plan to continue a successful path into the next decade.

Faculty and students called the dental clinic "the showplace" of the Rhododendron Building. The first clinic had professional dental chairs and all the requisite equipment, including supporting X-ray units.

A-B Tech came this far through truly collaborative and spirited determination. "We are the most fortunate people I know," Tom Simpson often said. "We are permitted to work with the region's most valuable resource: the people." That sentiment was another of his shared philosophies. Upon his sudden death on the last day of July in 1975, the family of A-B Tech felt that it was they who were the fortunate ones to have worked with President Tom Simpson.

ASHEVILLE-BUNCOMBE
TECHNICAL COLLEGE

The Haynes Years

"The Community's College"

The loss of President Simpson left heavy hearts throughout the college community. Harvey Haynes, who had been handpicked by Simpson and who had shared the dream of building the college on Victoria Road, said the loss was traumatic, but he also understood the importance of continuing the progress and vowed to provide leadership when the board of trustees unanimously appointed him president. Constancy of purpose would be the encouragement needed to heal and move onward.

Haynes believed the most important first steps he could take as the new president would be facility development. In 1975, A-B Tech was like a growing child in need of new clothes. Development of curriculum in the early years produced a strong mind and body. However, with such rapid growth, it had outgrown its space. Now with the number of curriculum students continuing to soar, and continuing education students numbering in the tens of thousands, more land and more facilities were needed desperately. "We were overcrowded and growing faster than we had places to put people and programs," Haynes recalls. It had been just a little more than 15 years since trustee W. P. Griffin had looked in alarm at the original two buildings for the Industrial Center and worried that the school had overbuilt. Who would have imagined in those days that the dream would become so huge? The dream team did. A-B Tech took to heart state Director of Trade and Industry Wade Martin's early directive to "think big," and thus began an expansion that would ultimately result in giving the Asheville campus the footprint it bears today.

An agreement initially established by Simpson came to fruition in 1974 with the purchase of a 78-acre tract from the Roman Catholic diocese. This included Asheville Catholic High School, Fernihurst (renamed Mount Mary by the diocese), and the Smith-McDowell House. Recognizing the historical significance of the house, A-B Tech's board of trustees arranged to lease the structure to the Western North Carolina Historical Association. Today, local history is preserved in the now-restored Smith-McDowell House Museum.

Under the leadership of Harvey Haynes, the college's physical footprint grew as additional property was acquired from the Catholic diocese and the City of Asheville. Haynes credits county and state officials for helping A-B Tech grow. "We had the best local support of any of the community colleges. That kind of trust goes a long way," he says.

The new Balsam Computer Technology Center houses 15 labs, 1,500 data drops, almost 40 miles of Cat-5 network cable, and more than 300 computers. Nearly every student will have at least one technology course in the center throughout their education at the college.

An early classroom building, Laurel—along with Oak—was formerly Asheville Catholic High School. Today, it contains office and classroom space for social and behavioral sciences; developmental reading, math, and foreign language labs; the academic learning center; and an open computer lab. Among the additions to the building was the auditorium, dedicated in 2002 as the Ferguson Auditorium to honor longtime college benefactors Jack and Carolyn Ferguson.

And although the closing of the Asheville Catholic High School seemed a great loss at the time, its transfer to A-B Tech would continue education for the community as the school buildings became Oak and Laurel, buildings that would be used for added class space and a gymnasium. In that same spirit, in 1979, officials of the diocese sold St. John Vianney Hall to the college.

Once a pre-seminary school, St. John Vianney Hall was renamed the Hemlock Building and housed the new paramedic training program. Max Queen, now vice president of continuing education, said that in the late 1970s, A-B Tech led the way in training emergency medical technicians, still committed to filling community workforce needs. Queen, a graduate of A-B Tech's emergency medical science and associate's degree nursing programs, was department chair of the EMS programs and its continuing education component during the Haynes years. "St. John Vianney Hall was never intended to be a classroom building," he

The Hemlock Building is home to the curriculum programs of basic law enforcement training, criminal justice technology, early childhood associate, social services, teacher associate, and emergency medical science. Courses in emergency medical science range from basic emergency care to advanced patient assessment. Students also learn basic knowledge of emergency vehicles and communication needs.

explains. "The building was formerly a dorm, and we were packed to the rafters with the law enforcement program, the medical tech lab, early childhood development program, and continuing education." Queen shared a small office in the sub-basement. "In order for me to see someone in continuing education, I had to trudge up three flights of stairs and through an open shower space that was considered the hall."

Another of Queen's memories speaks to the quality of the EMS program. On what seemed an ordinary day in a classroom of students practicing clinical emergency skills, the adjunct instructor fell ill. "We immediately saw the classic symptoms of a heart attack—altered consciousness and pain in his arm," says Queen. Shifting from the classroom scenario to real-time action, Queen and others went to work, called 911, and carried the instructor up the flight of stairs to the awaiting ambulance. Their emergency action saved his life.

The cumbersome layout of the old Hemlock Building would soon be just another memory. "Fortunately, with the bond referendum of 1993, we were able to replace the building and work with the architect to design the new space," Queen says. The new building, opened in 1997, has a bay area for training on emergency vehicles. Now, instead of the tiny office Queen occupied, the basement houses an area set up for crime scene investigations for the criminal justice program, an indoor firing range for the basic law enforcement program, and a rappelling tower.

Ernest Grant—"Mr. Burn Center"

When Ernest Grant enrolled in the practical nursing program in 1977, his biggest worry with this big, bold step he'd taken was finding the right shoes. "I knew I couldn't do my clinical work without white shoes," says Grant. You see, Grant stood six-foot-five as a high school senior and had a shoe size that more than matched his frame—size 15. Fortunately for Grant, one of his nursing instructors had a neighbor who ran a shoe store and could special order white tennis shoes. Problem solved.

Grant's shoes remain big ones to fill. Known throughout the Southeast as "Mr. Burn Center," he's the go-to guy for clinical education on burns. In his role as the nursing education clinician for Burn Outreach at the North Carolina Jaycee Burn Center in Chapel Hill, he wears many hats. Much of his responsibility involves acting as a liaison between the Burn Center and referring hospitals, keeping him in constant communication with nursing and allied health personnel on behalf of patients. He also writes standards for the care of burn patients, teaches other health professionals, and serves as a spokesperson for prevention. His work is far-reaching and exhausting, but always rewarding.

He credits much of his drive, his interest in reaching out to the community, and his ability to juggle so many roles to the intangible lessons he learned at the college. "There's an old saying: 'One can stand on the shoulders of giants and reach back and help others who are coming,'" he says. "A-B Tech did this for me. It gave me my foundation."

Grant was named 2002 national Nurse of the Year by *Nursing Spectrum* magazine and was one of six winners of the 2004 American Association of Community Colleges outstanding alumni award.

In addition to classroom and laboratory instruction, students in the allied health programs such as emergency medical science complete learning experiences at health settings in the community. A-B Tech has clinical relationships with Buncombe County EMS, Henderson County EMS, and Mission Hospitals.

In the 1970s, the Asheville Atomics competed against teams from other community colleges in North Carolina as well as South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. This team posted a 22-5 record.

Queen will not forget the old building, however. In his office, amid other keepsakes of a 30-year career, he keeps one of its bricks, signed by all who worked in the building, and dated August 5, 1997—the day the old Hemlock Building came down.

Restoring the Past, Securing the Future

The cardinal painted on the worn wooden floor of what is now the Ivy Building has faded a bit since the days it was the mascot of the St. Genevieve-of-the-Pines School. Where youngsters used to gather for games and assemblies, the building still preserves the past, but in a decidedly different way. In 1989, after the purchase of the remaining adjacent property owned by the diocese, it would become the home and studio for an innovative program known as decorative restoration.

Roger Tidbury, the initial instructor, and his successor, Derick Tickle—an experienced craftsman, businessman, and an examiner for the City and Guilds of London certification

Upon graduation, students receive the City and Guilds of London certificate for Decorative Painting and Restoration and are well-prepared for jobs in residential and commercial decorating, as well as historic restoration, picture framing, and architectural gilding.

program—created a curriculum that would soon draw national attention, bringing students from various regions and other states.

Tickle established the fundamentals of the decorative restoration program—paint technology, and the use of a variety of materials to preserve, restore, or enhance surfaces both old and new. Over the years, he refined European methods to meet American needs, such as using more latex paint instead of oil and dropping the metric system of measurement. Tickle also brought in contemporary methods for decorative faux finishing in response to the growing trend. Students still incorporate some, or all, of these techniques in a final project, in which teams take one of the dozen or so partitioned areas in the building and, through the mixture of paint, plaster, skill, and ingenuity, create their projects. Each room must be prepped, and each element of the room—baseboard, fireplace surround, moldings, walls, and floors—must be utilized.

In addition to the steady practice decorative restoration students receive while in the 44-week program, they often are requested to work on restoration projects on Biltmore Estate and other historic Asheville buildings. A recent class regilded George Vanderbilt's bedroom, using nearly $20,000 worth of gold leaf. With practical skills honed by such projects and a craft certificate from City and Guilds of London awarded upon completion, graduates of the program are often sought by major restoration companies throughout the nation.

Sometimes a little elbow grease is required before creativity can blossom. Students must scrape all traces of previous work on a floor surface before beginning their own project, a required element of the program. Decorative restoration students also have opportunities to work with many of Asheville's historic buildings and homes, including Biltmore Estate.

Those Who Do, Teach

Tim Hanlon pulls a "five in one"—or as he calls it, "a mutt tool"—out of his side pocket. It is one of the many painter's tools used in his program. His undersized office is jammed with other tools of the trade: a roll of green painter's tape, a large color wheel, and a mug that holds various brushes, including one made of badger hair. "It's got a lot of spring to it," he explains. "Great for knocking down mountains of glaze."

Hanlon, coordinator of the decorative restoration program, is typical of the instructors at A-B Tech; like the others, he is not an academic holed up in an office. Those who teach at the college do so with real-world experience, and many of them continue to practice in their respective fields. As Jack Davis, retired vice president of student services, explains, the college has always held the philosophy of hiring adept instructors, which in turn has resulted in producing students who could hit the ground running upon graduation. "We hire people instead of pieces of paper," Davis says. "The instructors are individuals who are experts in their field, who can convey information, regardless of whether they hold a master's degree or are highly credentialed."

Hanlon majored in English, but he grew up in an old house in a historically rich area of the country and always enjoyed working with his hands. He began to work in the preservation field. Upon moving to Asheville in 1996, Hanlon enrolled in the decorative restoration program, studying under Derick Tickle, which further enhanced his skills. When Tickle retired, Hanlon was presented with the opportunity to instruct and coordinate the program, which he readily accepted. It was another perfect match.

he competitive spirit runs high as udent chefs on the Hot Food Team nually contend for the coveted linary national championship title. ar after year, A-B Tech produces inning squads. This 2006 team ished second in national competition.

An initiative in the late 1970s advanced A-B Tech's concentration on helping to build the region's future. "Bringing business to the region was so important," explains Harvey Haynes, who is credited with securing more than 72 industries during his full career at the college. "It's the main reason A-B Tech was started—to create better jobs and better lives for the people of Western North Carolina." In the early years of the Industrial Education Center, Haynes and other members of his administration would travel north to the headquarters of industries, many of which were considering a move to the South where, among other incentives, labor costs were lower. Using both an analytical and practical approach, the team would study the need and develop a training proposal to present to the company.

In this period in the 1970s, Asheville was one of the cities in an area rapidly growing in population. Competition for industry relocation was intense; to distinguish itself, and to assist expanding industries, the college established a skills center. "It's one thing to bring a new industry in for training. But if you want to put the icing on the cake, you need to help it expand," he says. The center was the first of its kind in North Carolina and was open to any interested industry already in Asheville or thinking of relocating to the city. Haynes remembers one business that manufactured a type of automotive gear used by 18-wheel tractor-trailers. The company converted to being a highly specialized and sophisticated gear cutter and required training on the new equipment. Then, as now, A-B Tech provided customized management, as well as industrial and safety training, including the ability for business trainees to practice on their own production equipment.

Throughout the 1970s and '80s, A-B Tech kept pace as the economy crossed the bridge from the industrial age to the information age. As the resulting economy made for fertile ground for entrepreneurs, the college launched another pioneering initiative: the Small Business Center. To assist new business owners in maximizing their potential for success, the center offered legal, tax, management, and marketing assistance.

A-B Tech's ability to synchronize with shifts in the community, the economy, and education was reflected in two name changes—to Asheville-Buncombe Technical College in 1979, and in 1987 to Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College. The years bookended by these changes represented growth at A-B Tech with another acquisition of property, expansion of facilities, and the addition of college transfer programs to the nearly three dozen existing career programs. The North Carolina Community College System had grown to be larger than the state university system, and its flagship in Western North Carolina wore its new name proudly, knowing that the addition of one simple word—*community*—symbolized that which the institution was destined to become: the community's college.

A-B Tech medical laboratory students such as Amanda Boone Rogers complete clinical internships at Mission Hospitals. Students learn to perform vital clinical laboratory procedures in chemistry, hematology, microbiology, and immunohematology.

Recipe for Success

The recipe for becoming a successful chef calls for a passion for food, a dash of humility, and an education that teaches culinary fundamentals, says Reza Setayesh, owner/chef of Rezaz, a popular Asheville restaurant.

The passion ingredient already existed in his heart, head, and hands, and thus was easy to supply. The teenage immigrant from Iran came to America in 1978 and made his way to Los Angeles, working in a number of hotel kitchens under European chefs, one of whom graduated from A-B Tech's culinary program. Late at night, when the kitchen's buzz quieted, the two often chatted about life. "He told me that I had a knack for this and that I should get an education so that I could make it my career," Setayesh recalls. His admiration for this early mentor prompted him to ask him where he went to culinary school. Imagine the young cook's reaction when the chef told him about the little school with the big reputation in the mountains of North Carolina. "I had no idea where North Carolina was, let alone Asheville," he laughs. But he soon found out.

It was a sultry summer night by Asheville's mountain standards. The city's airport was almost asleep, the employee sweeping the floors ready to close the doors. Accustomed to a bustling airport like LAX, Setayesh thought he'd find a cab waiting curbside. Not so in 1985. The employee explained that he'd have to call and wait. Forty-five minutes later, the taxi arrived.

And he would wait yet again. The school year wouldn't start for a few more weeks, and Setayesh, who had sold his car and stuffed his life into two suitcases, thought about heading back to Los Angeles. Time to add the dash of humility to the recipe. Chef Bob Werth and Frederick Johnsson, division director at that time, welcomed him to the college. Setayesh entered the culinary program and launched a career. "I came here to learn the fundamentals, the building blocks of this business, of being a chef, as well as being in business for myself," he says. "In addition to basic knowledge, the school gave me a level of confidence that continues to shine through."

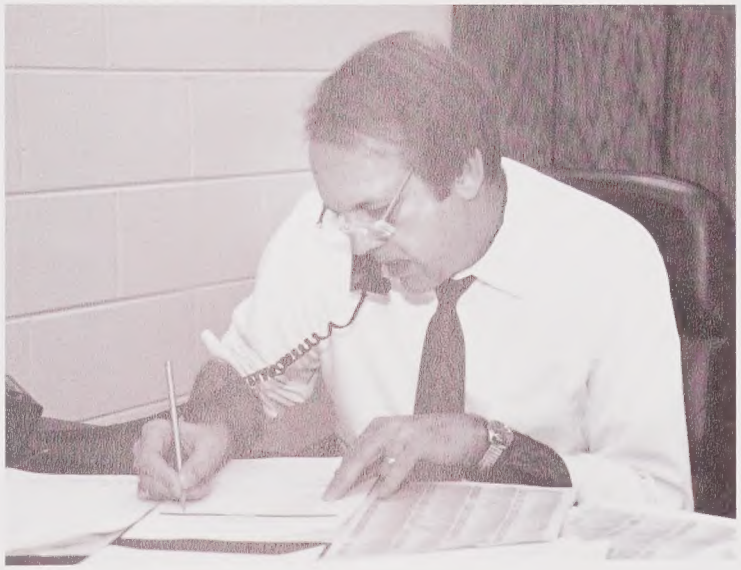
Jazz floats in the background of Rezaz on this morning, the melody interspersed with the noise of pots and pans as the staff preps for another busy Friday. Dressed in his white chef's jacket, Setayesh takes a few minutes to tell the story of how he came to own a restaurant in historic Biltmore Village. "It's been a great ride," he says, a path that included being recruited by Marriott Corporation straight from A-B Tech, to returning to his culinary roots to teach at the school for a few years, to opening and managing several country club restaurants in the region, to converting a landmark hardware store into a mecca for Mediterranean cuisine. Still very much hands-on, he politely wraps up the story. He is needed in the kitchen.

The Bailey Years

America's Community College

Another day begins for K. Ray Bailey, another day with purpose. With enthusiasm as stimulating as this February day's brisk temperatures, the president of the college on Victoria Road starts his morning by reflecting on what A-B Tech has become. "We are America's community college," he says, with his signature smile. He leans back in his chair, tilts his head to the side, and, in his usual fashion, explains his affirmation by telling a story. "When I became president in 1990, I said in a staff meeting that we're the number-one community college in North Carolina. Everyone cheered! I've always said to our people that I want their program to be the best—the very best. The whole thing is about believing in ourselves, reaching our potential, and going beyond."

This very purpose pulses throughout the 144-acre Asheville campus—to students through instructors, to programs through curriculum, and to businesses and their communities through partnerships and facilities. Today, the college is a superior-rated comprehensive community college enrolling more than 26,000 students. From two buildings, less than a handful of industrial education programs, and a couple of hundred students in its beginnings, to more than 21 buildings on the Asheville campus, a campus in Madison, the Enka campus in Candler, and A-B Tech at the Mall, the college has indeed undergone a metamorphosis. And even with this growth, one thing remains unchanged: its dedication to student success.

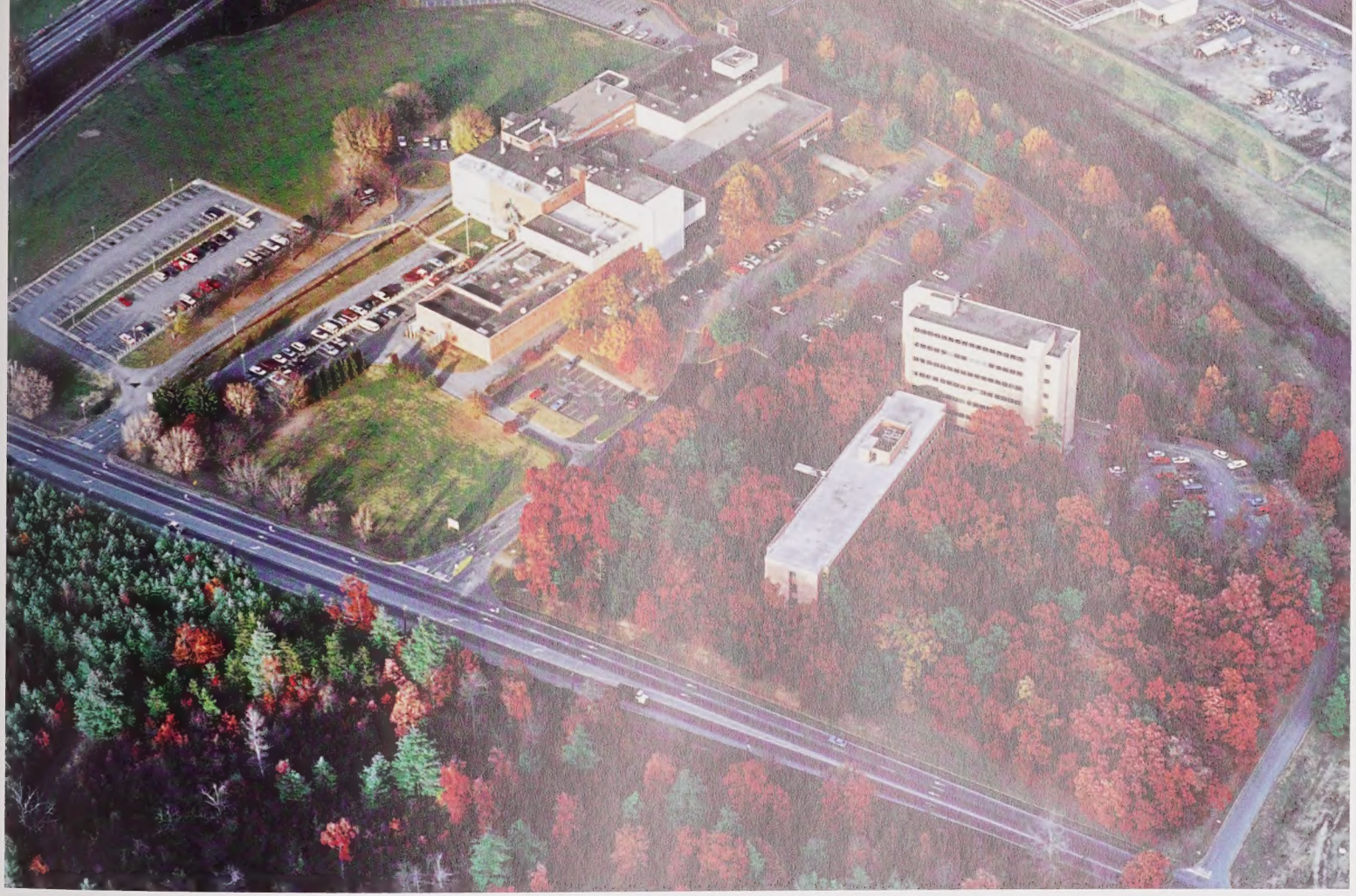


K. Ray Bailey, third president of A-B Tech, has been a resourceful leader who could acquire or accomplish nearly anything that was needed to improve programs, facilities, and opportunities. Believing in the purpose of a community college—to be responsive to the community—Bailey's legacy will be his effectiveness at building partnerships and finding ways to serve the community and respond to its needs.

People come to A-B Tech's Madison campus for many reasons: some for general education courses such as English and some to attend a community meeting. Some are taking a continuing education class like blacksmithing or fly fishing. Since its official opening in 1990, the Madison campus has fulfilled myriad community needs.

Inviting Success

In the words of William Shakespeare, "To climb steep hills requires slow pace at first." English instructor Kathy Godfrey knows this well. She also recognizes that not all of her students may find studying the Bard interesting. So she slows the pace, so to speak. "We're just 'hangin' with Will,'" she tells her class. This morning, a group of her students dressed in black stands in front of the class and reenacts a passage from *Hamlet*. The expected exercise in an English class, yes? Not exactly. In this presentation, a voice from the corner interprets the lines in an unexpected southern vernacular. "I gave them complete freedom to perform how they wished. They needed only to preserve the language," says Godfrey. At the end of the scene, the class erupts in applause and calls for more. This lesson in Shakespeare they will surely remember.



The 37-acre Enka campus is the result of a generous donation from BASF (formerly American Enka Corporation) in 2000. The gift is representative of the community's support and belief in A-B Tech.

Some would call this approach unusual. A-B Tech calls it "invitational." In 2004, the college became the only one in the United States to be named an "Inviting School" by the International Alliance for Invitational Education. Through people, places, policies, programs, and processes, students and faculty alike are cordially, creatively, intentionally, and consistently summoned to realize their potential.

The invitational approach begins and ends with people. Put another way, it's "personal," according to Early College second-year student Jordan Miller. "The teachers do a good job with invitational learning," he offers. "It's about teachers inviting people to learn and about developing a relationship rather than a transaction." Serious words from a sixteen-year-old. Jordan is one of about 60 students selected each year for the Early College program—

Continuing education courses taught in the comfort and convenience of A-B Tech at the Mall include Spanish I, creative writing, computer empowerment for the workplace, women's self-defense, and Pilates. Students include members of the community as well as employees of mall retailers and small businesses in the area. A customer service class called Give Them the Pickle is especially popular for those who work with the public.

Why Early College? "Classes are a little more challenging than standard courses," explains one Early College student. "It's an associate's degree for free—a year earlier than you'd normally get it." Early College offers high school students a place to learn on a college campus, with more freedom than traditional high school, but also with more responsibility.

a partnership between Buncombe County Schools and A-B Tech. "This is an opportunity for students to shine, for students who for some reason are not going to fit in the comprehensive high school box," explains Meg Turner, principal. Early College students are first-generation college goers. They are English as a Second Language students. They are the creatively gifted and the sometimes academically gifted. In sum, they represent the diversity of the community. These students attend classes on the college's campus and earn an associate's degree, or two years of transferable credit, along with their high school diploma. The classes are small; the teachers supportive; the curriculum integrated, relevant, and as a result, interesting. For example, students in World Studies are scattered outside the classroom in small groups of two or three. They appear to be digging in the dirt. Upon closer look, they are placing an object in the ground. "Our assignment was to make an artifact from the time period we were studying

K. Ray Bailey: A Man for All Reasons

There are two mementos in particular in K. Ray Bailey's office that would, upon closer examination, give anyone who didn't know him a true, high-definition picture of the man who has been a driving force of growth for A-B Tech. One reminder hangs on the wall and says it in words—"a consummate people person, a masterful communicator, a man of few equals, approachable, he gives everyone the personal touch." So reads the honorary doctorate of education from Western Carolina University. The other is more subtle in some ways; in others, more curious. It is a carved wooden giraffe that stands above the papers, files, and other tools of productivity on his desk. Given to him by a student originally from Kenya, it symbolizes that which the student intended: "So you'll always remember me," she told him.

Ray Bailey is a leader who always remembers what's important—the success of the students. Encouraged by his affable, open, and determined style, those who work for him, through him, but always alongside him remember the mission as well. Thus it's not surprising that in 2005, when he was honored with the North Carolina Community College President of the Year Award, he deflected the credit and recognized the efforts of the team—the faculty, staff, board of trustees, foundation board, and community supporters. Even in the 23 years that preceded his position as president, Bailey helped guide the growth of a technical and trades school into a superior and comprehensive community college, not just as a leader, but as a builder.

"President Bailey is all things to all people," says Marilyn McDonald, director of Career Pathways. "And what you see of Ray Bailey is the truth. He lives the college mission. He cares about the community and is always responsive to its needs." As an educator at heart and a public servant by profession, his passion—and as a result, his work—naturally extends beyond the walls of this institution. Such unselfish dedication to help change the lives of so many earned him one of the most prestigious awards a North Carolinian can receive: the Order of the Long Leaf Pine.

Kathy Godfrey, alumna, A-B Tech English instructor, and one of the many college success stories, sums up the man whom she so admires. "He has always had the broad vision of what we could be, and he always conveys that message," she says. "He never says no. Instead he says, 'Let's see how we can.'"

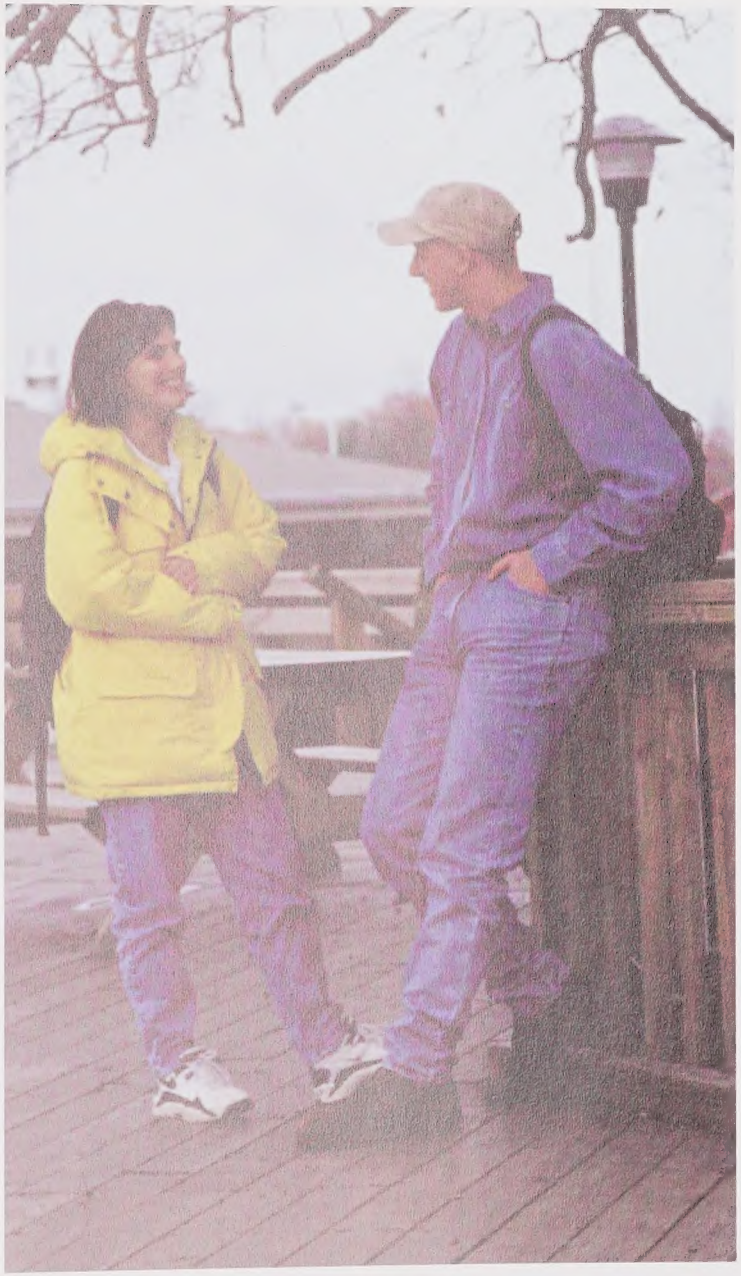
When one door closes, another door opens. What was once a large manufacturing facility, providing jobs for community members, lives on as a biotechnology center, small business incubator, and training center. The initiatives of the Enka campus will continue to provide an economic stimulus for the community.

and bury it on campus so that another class could dig it up and try to discover what period it came from," says Lauryn Sherlin, also a second-year student.

Early College is one of five ways in which high school students can earn both high school and college credit. The programs, all components of Career Pathways, are working partnerships—inventive means to ensure student success early on. The partners include Asheville City Schools, Buncombe County Schools, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, Madison County Schools, and A-B Tech. The entire spectrum of programs has been in full

force since 2000 and is just another example that A-B Tech puts students—*all students*—first.

The "power of partnerships" is a principle that has defined K. Ray Bailey's tenure as president. An active board member of numerous community organizations, Bailey seems always to be in the right place at the right time, and consequently, in a position to understand community needs and build alliances to meet those needs. On the eve of a Labor Day weekend in 1999, one such chance encounter occurred. A-B Tech had just finished a nearly two-day-long 40th anniversary celebration. Bailey admits he was worn out and not quite feeling up to what was still on his calendar—an event at the Racquet Club where the governor's new chief of staff, a native of Madison County, would be introduced. "I figured I wouldn't be missed," admits Bailey. "But when my car had a decision to make, I found it went straight—right to the Racquet Club." He found a cool corner of the room next to the air conditioning unit, and providentially, next to Jack Dellinger, manager of the BASF plant in Asheville. Dellinger was talking with a German executive of BASF who was responsible for all BASF properties in North America. Ray Bailey did what he does best—talked with genuine enthusiasm and pride about the ways A-B Tech was, indeed, the *community's* college. The conversation naturally turned to discussions about the role of the college in economic development in general, and specifically its intent to develop a small-business incubator. "The governor



The Beech Tree deck in the center of the main campus was built by carpentry students in 1995. At the crossroads of Elm, Laurel, Holly, and Oak, it is a campus landmark and frequent meeting place.

Computers have come a long way from the room-size Univac that required an environment where the temperature was cold enough to store food. In those early days of big machines and punch cards, A-B Tech offered data processing classes. As information technology advances, A-B Tech keeps pace.

gave a speech, we all shook hands, and I didn't think anything more about it," he recalls.

Less than a month later, Dellinger walked into Bailey's office, showed him a set of plans, and asked what Bailey thought he could do with the building. A little taken aback, Bailey explained that he didn't have the funds to purchase the building, to which Dellinger replied, "We're not talking about money." During the conversation at the Racquet Club, BASF executives had mentioned they thought one of the three substantial brick buildings on its 37-acre property would be ideal as a small-business incubator, and with the county's support, they wanted to give the entire property to A-B Tech. In 2000, BASF transferred the deed to the college—at the time, the largest donation of property to any community college in the country—and the Enka campus was born.

The BASF property was originally opened in 1929 as a textile plant by American Enka Corporation, a Dutch company purchased by BASF in 1985. Once a catalyst for the economy, providing jobs for many, the physical plant now serves a different role and remains

Sarah Schober, in blue gloves, works in the biotech lab on the Enka campus. Schober earned associate's degrees in arts, science, and applied science in biotechnology and was a speaker at the August 2006 graduation—all while raising a family.

an economic builder. As A-B Tech's Enka campus, the goal is to create a new workforce and infuse millions of dollars into the region's economy. Through the Biotech Center and Small Business Incubator, and through the Corporate Technology Training and Conference Center, the Enka campus is projected to have an estimated economic impact of $3 million annually on the Asheville area, serving the needs of 9,000 existing businesses and incubating at least 20 startup businesses each year.

As the hub for A-B Tech's continuing education programs, the Enka campus supports both the cultural development of its citizens and the economy. "Continuing education has always been an important part of the mix of programs we offer," says Max Queen, vice president of continuing education. Lifelong learning is a concept at the heart of the development of the myriad courses to promote everything from personal growth to workforce development. As an example of the diversity of courses today in the Harvey L. Haynes Corporate Technology Training and Conference Center, a class is learning the basics of computer

The community's firefighters count on A-B Tech for training. The program prepares new generations of firefighters and provides continuing education for those already in the field.

repair and hardware upgrades. Across the lawn in the Small Business Center, business owners are attending an IRS small-business forum. In the Technology Commercialization Center, a course on forklift operation is under way.

An important factor in the development and execution of the continuing education curriculum is also its convenience. A-B Tech

Although the patients of veterinary medical technology students can't speak, their role in education is as important as human patients are to the students in other allied health programs. The curriculum includes instruction in veterinary anatomy, laboratory techniques, radiology, medical terminology, and small- and large-animal clinical practices.

often supports training for professionals in public service by taking the instruction to the people. Firefighting is an example. Here in an off-site facility, a firefighter wearing about 50 pounds of personal protective gear carries up several flights of stairs a fire hose weighing equally as much. This is the beginning of a grueling test called the Davis-Dobson Combat Challenge—an element of the North Carolina Fire Academy program at A-B Tech. The 12-week course consists of 500 hours of intense physical and mental challenges leading to certification as a Firefighter II in North Carolina. The Fire Academy, created by A-B Tech's continuing education division, is yet another example of the power of partnerships, representing collaboration of the college, fire departments in Western North Carolina, and the N.C. Department of Insurance.

The Ripple Effect

Mary Lou Surgi's voice echoes in the voluminous warehouse-like receiving area of Blue Ridge Food Ventures (BRFV) as she gives another tour of the nonprofit "shared-use processing facility" she directs. The organization is an initiative of AdvantageWest North Carolina and the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, created to provide services to those wishing to start or grow small businesses in the food industry.

It is particularly fitting that BRFV is a tenant of the Small Business Incubator on the Enka campus. As a shared-use processing facility, BRFV is not only promoting local agriculture, but also ultimately boosting the local economy—precisely the objective of the incubator. However, this tenant's goal has even more of a ripple effect, multiplying the number of business start-ups from one hub.

The 11,000-square-foot facility has been renovated to support three distinct processing areas as well as separate dry storage and walk-in coolers and freezers. In the receiving area where the tour starts, boxes of jars have been unloaded and await their use for jams and jelly products of one of BRFV's clients that rent space for processing the food items (clients pay only for the time actually used). Surgi makes a point to say that she's often the one using the forklift to accept deliveries, having been certified and licensed through a course at A-B Tech. She's also a graduate of A-B Tech's culinary program, deciding to seek that degree after spending many years in the field of international development of agricultural programs.

"This is a labor of love," says Surgi, who feels fortunate that she's been able to combine her broad experience in agriculture, economic development, and nutrition into one task with far-reaching possibilities for the community she calls home.

Magna DNA Laboratory is one of the few Western North Carolina paternity testing laboratories. Run by a molecular geneticist and an experienced biochemist, it is located in the Biotechnology Incubator on the Enka campus. Its manager is Sooja Lee, Ph.D., a biochemist/molecular biologist.

Sooja Lee is a diminutive dynamo whose knowledge and skills apply to some very small things: molecules. This biochemist/molecular biologist runs Magna DNA, a laboratory in the Enka campus Biotechnology Incubator dedicated to providing DNA paternity testing. The lab is the only facility in Western North Carolina where the entire testing process—from receiving samples to reporting results—is kept in-house. Why Asheville? Why the Biotechnology Incubator? "As a start-up biotech business, it is very expensive to rent space in the private sector and nearly impossible to find lab space that is suitable for my type of work," explains Lee. Needing what is referred to as a Class II laboratory—a hooded wet lab—Lee explains that the Enka campus biotechnology building already had wet labs, and A-B Tech was willing to make the necessary adaptations to make the space suitable for DNA testing. The start-up found a home at a monthly lease rate far less than in the community and with access to the free services of the Small Business Center also on campus. "And not only are we providing a needed service for the community, we are also creating jobs," adds Lee.

Significant funding for the A-B Tech biotechnology initiative has come from a grant from the Golden LEAF Foundation, a nonprofit organization administering funds derived from one-half of North Carolina's share of the master settlement agreement with cigarette manufacturers. The organization awards the funds to projects that show the most potential for strengthening the state's long-term economy, a vision A-B Tech shares. Biotechnology's growth as an industry in the state and its potential for growth of the state's economy fulfill this objective.

Donna S. Robinson records valve pressure in the simulated biotechnology production facility on the Enka campus. As Western North Carolina attracts more biotechnology industries, the job market becomes more attractive. A-B Tech's associate's in applied science degree in biotechnology is a popular program.

Another Golden LEAF Foundation grant has enabled a collaborative effort between Volvo Construction Equipment North America and A-B Tech, with the intended outcome of adding new manufacturing jobs to Buncombe County. Demonstrating its success in providing facilities and training for industry, A-B Tech

The welding program is more than 40 years old, one of the longest-running curriculum offerings. These students are grinding the surface of a pipe to prepare it for a good bond. Courses explore the science, technology, and applications essential to employment in the welding and metal industry. One full semester is devoted to blueprint reading.

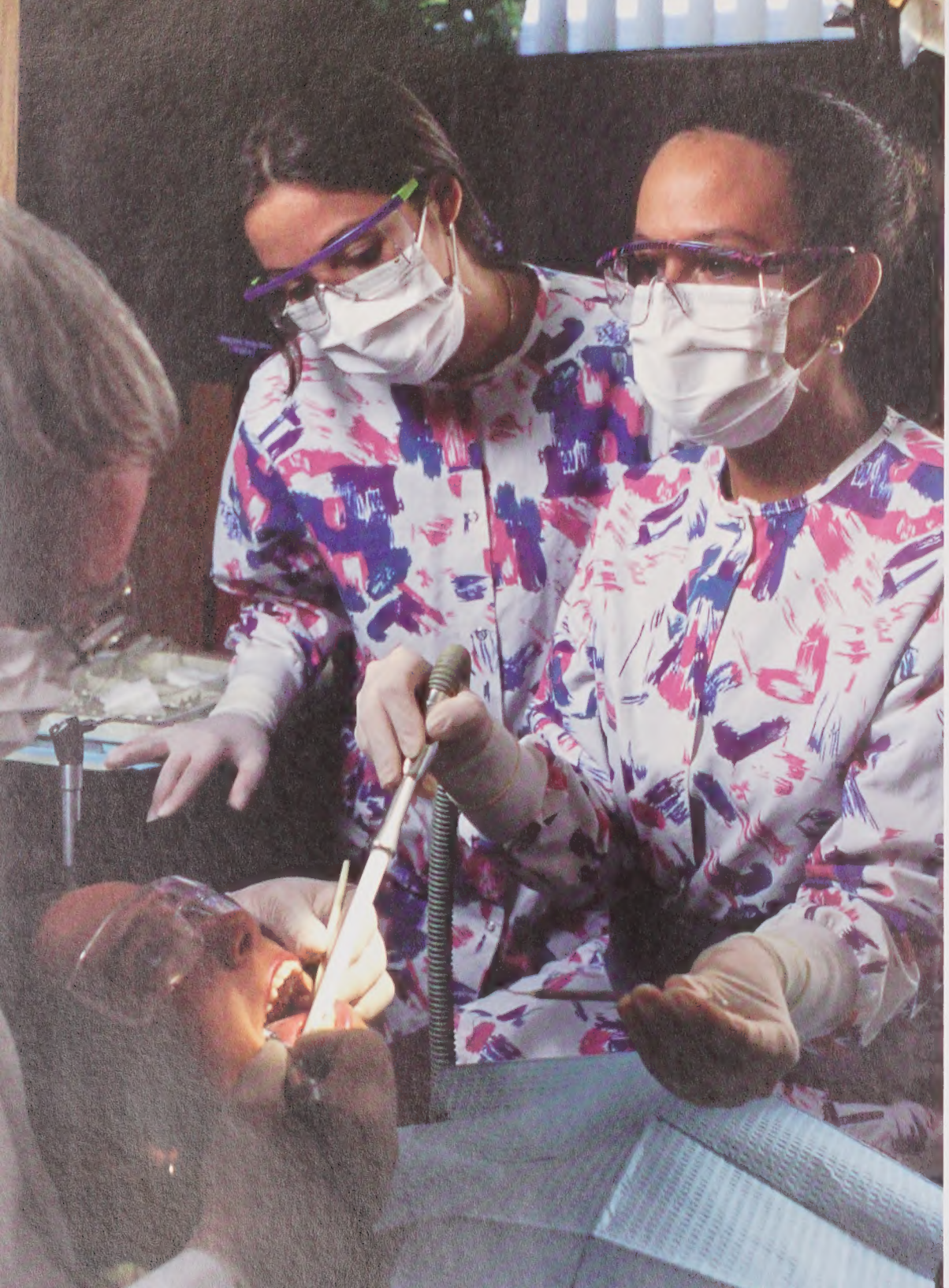
helped to persuade Volvo to locate a production plant in Asheville for its new line of large construction excavators. "Ray Bailey and his staff do a great job of improving what's available to the community from a training perspective," explains Dave Million, vice president and general manager for Volvo's Asheville plant.

With funds from the grant, A-B Tech upgraded the welding facility on the main campus by outfitting it with the specialized high-tech tools that Volvo needs. With the upgrade, the college also added a separate Advanced Assembly and Simulation Lab, set up as a virtual factory assembly line. Potential Volvo employees undergo 36 hours of intensive assembly training, and A-B Tech trainers partner closely with Volvo to ensure that the highly specialized training is administered properly. When the welding lab is not used for Volvo training, students from curriculum programs use the stations, which have some of the latest computerized welding technology in the area. The Volvo/A-B Tech project is truly symbiotic.

While the sparks fly in the welding lab, a yellow school bus in front of the Rhododendron Building awaits the third-graders who have visited the dental lab. The sun directly overhead signals that it is approaching noon. Earlier, the occupants of the bus had slowly disembarked, apprehensive about this visit. But now they are smiling as they climb onto the bus, each clutching a goody bag of incentives to help them practice good dental health. Through a collaborative program of the college, Eblen Charities, and the Buncombe County Health Center, the children from Asheville City and Buncombe County Schools receive sealants on their new permanent molars to help prevent tooth decay. The sealants are free of charge and provide another opportunity for the dental assisting and dental hygiene students to gain valuable practical experience.

Machining student Otis Davis sets up a computer numerical control (CNC) machine in the process of creating dies for small engine parts. The finished product was a one-cylinder, gasoline-powered, four-stroke engine small enough to fit inside a quart-size carton.

In 2000, the dental clinic underwent a major renovation, funded in part by a bond referendum, and also through the fund-raising efforts of the A-B Tech Foundation. Area dentists have such a high level of respect for the program that has served as Western North Carolina's trainer of dental support personnel that many allowed the college faculty to use their offices one day a week to provide clinical training while the renovation work was under way.



A-B Tech's dental clinic serves the community as well as the students. Everyone from children to seniors from Buncombe, Haywood, and Henderson counties comes to the clinic. Patients receive affordable quality care, and students gain valuable clinical experience.

At the top of the campus in the Magnolia Building, culinary students prepare for the Thursday lunch and dinner. This week's theme is golf, and player cards, balls, and tees are displayed atop the white linen tablecloths on each table. All tables are filled, and the patrons include faculty, administrators, business leaders, and members of the community. Others wait for their seating times in the lobby. The Thursday lunch, a regular event since the late 1960s, is so popular that space is often filled within minutes of the time reservations open up on Monday mornings.

A young waiter named Justin greets his guests with an engaging smile. When a woman at the table asks him what he recommends, he says, "Oh, the braised lamb shank, but be sure to save room for the delicious strawberry torte for dessert." When prompted, he enthusiastically explains the braising method and how that process breaks down the collagen in the meat to give it, as he says, "that smack factor on the palate." The pride in what he is learning enhances the guests' enjoyment of the meal.

Changing Lives: Kathy Godfrey

Tears rolled down her cheeks as Kathy Godfrey sat in the pew in Sainte Chapelle on 4 Boulevard du Palais in Paris, quietly absorbing the beauty of the small Gothic sanctuary she had once only dreamed of visiting. In her lifetime, so many tears had either stained her face or been forced back in shame or frustration. This time, the tears were of joy.

"As I listened to the notes of Bach and Haydn that day, I thought how unlikely it was that someone like me would be sitting here," she recalls. As a young girl from a poor family, her attraction to "all things Paris" was buried deep inside when the only thing she seemed destined for was to continue the family tradition of working in a factory and scraping to make ends meet. For almost seven years, she sewed waistbands on women's polyester pants at a nearby factory. Nearly every Saturday night, the sheriff's department would show up at her trailer, where she lived with her baby and her crumbling wreck of a marriage. "I always knew that, surely, life had to be better than that, but I had no clue how to find a way out."

The answer came when one door closed—the factory's. And as it so often happens, another door opened. The federal government provided funding for displaced workers to retool through education. Godfrey turned to A-B Tech, where staff and instructors recognized the potential that she did not yet see for herself. From the springboard of A-B Tech, Godfrey went on to receive both a bachelor's and a master's degree. Today, she is an English instructor at A-B Tech, a novelist, and a renewed Francophile. "My experience is like so many others. It happens all the time here," she says. "There are people to push you, people to help, and people to show you that there *are* opportunities."

Even during regular classes, culinary students, shown here in the Birch Building kitchen, wear the traditional coat and pleated chef's hat. The old culinary classroom and hotel space have been remodeled for new programs in cosmetology, resort and spa management, and therapeutic massage.

After lunch, Ray Bailey is on the go. He gets in his car and heads out to the Madison campus. When the four-lane Highway 25-70 narrows to a two-lane road, and the mountains seem near enough to touch, the Madison campus is close at hand. Opened in 1990, the full-service campus serves the residents of North Buncombe, Madison, and Yancey counties, as well as areas of eastern Tennessee.

Connie Buckner, now director of the Madison campus, remembers the early days. "Going out into the community is the essence of A-B Tech," she says, "and as early as 1980, we've had a presence in Madison County." At that time, she was the director of admissions for the college, and Ray Sawyer was director of the Madison campus. The former Marshall High School was not being used, and the county offered the use of part of the facility to A-B Tech. The first formal classes were continuing education courses such as small engine repair and woodworking, as well as recertification for emergency medical technicians and training for area volunteer fire departments. "We were there primarily to extend services to Madison County, but if people from other communities and counties wanted to take classes here, they could," says Buckner.

In 1990, the Madison campus moved into a new building, built and owned by the county. At that time, Ray Bailey was vice president for fiscal affairs and, as such, was involved in the planning and completion of the building, including securing county funding. When Buckner became director in 1997, a few curriculum courses had been added. Her charge was to expand the offerings as well as ensure that the Madison campus was community centered. Soon, local organizations looked at the facility as not only a place for education, but also as a place to hold meetings.

As the college expanded in the number of buildings, the number of students, and the resulting traffic, the construction of a pedestrian bridge helped connect the facilities and make travel across campus easier.

"We'd look at the schedule every day, and most of the events had to do with community meetings," she laughs. That kind of response is exactly what makes Bailey happy. "For a county with a population of 20,000, we're thrilled that the campus is giving them not only educational opportunities, but a meeting place," Bailey says.

Today, the Madison campus is full-service. Students can choose from more than 40 curriculum/continuing education classes. They can also apply, take placement testing, be advised for curriculum programs, register and pay tuition, buy textbooks, and prepare and take the GED without having to drive to Asheville, as all services are in one convenient location.

Financing Future Success

Physical signage for A-B Tech is strategically located off major byways in Asheville, directing the way to the Victoria Road campus, but signs aren't necessary for local people. Mention the name, and the reaction is immediate. Almost everyone knows someone whose life has been changed because of the college. Consequently, financial support from the community by way of bond referendums has been received when requested. Bailey, through his recognized strengths of communication and collaboration, combined with his nearly 40 years of effective fiscal management at A-B Tech, has been able to secure the financial fuel needed for growth of facilities for many years—even those preceding his years as president. The bond referendums of 1993, for example, appropriated $7.5 million in local funds and $5 million in state funds, allowing the college to add on to the Rhododendron Building, improving facilities for the nursing and dental programs. The funding also enabled the renovation of Sunnicrest, the construction of the new Hemlock Building for allied health and public service programs, the expansion of the Learning Resources Center by 20,000 square feet, and additions of a new science lab and classroom building.

As Asheville has grown, the demand for skilled carpenters for residential construction has also grown. Like many programs at A-B Tech designed to accommodate working adults, students can earn a diploma in carpentry through either a day schedule or an evening schedule.

In 1990, the purchase of an additional 16.75 acres for the Asheville campus included Sunnicrest, giving the college one more building that reflects the rich history of the property.

Photo Courtesy of Shirley McLaughlin

Even with state and federal funding, for A-B Tech to fulfill its mission, there is a persistent need for additional financial support. "It's always been President Bailey's vision that any person in Madison or Buncombe counties who wants to get a college education can come here regardless of financial situation, and we can help that individual achieve the dream," explains Anita Metcalf, vice president of college relations. In 1996, with that objective as the impetus, Bailey established a new foundation to raise funds encompassing four specific areas: student scholarships, technology enhancements, faculty and staff professional development, and facility expansion and renovation. "It all goes back to the mission of student success," says Metcalf. "As a community college, and as *this* community's college, we are the first choice for many adults to seek an education. When they come here, many are not thinking

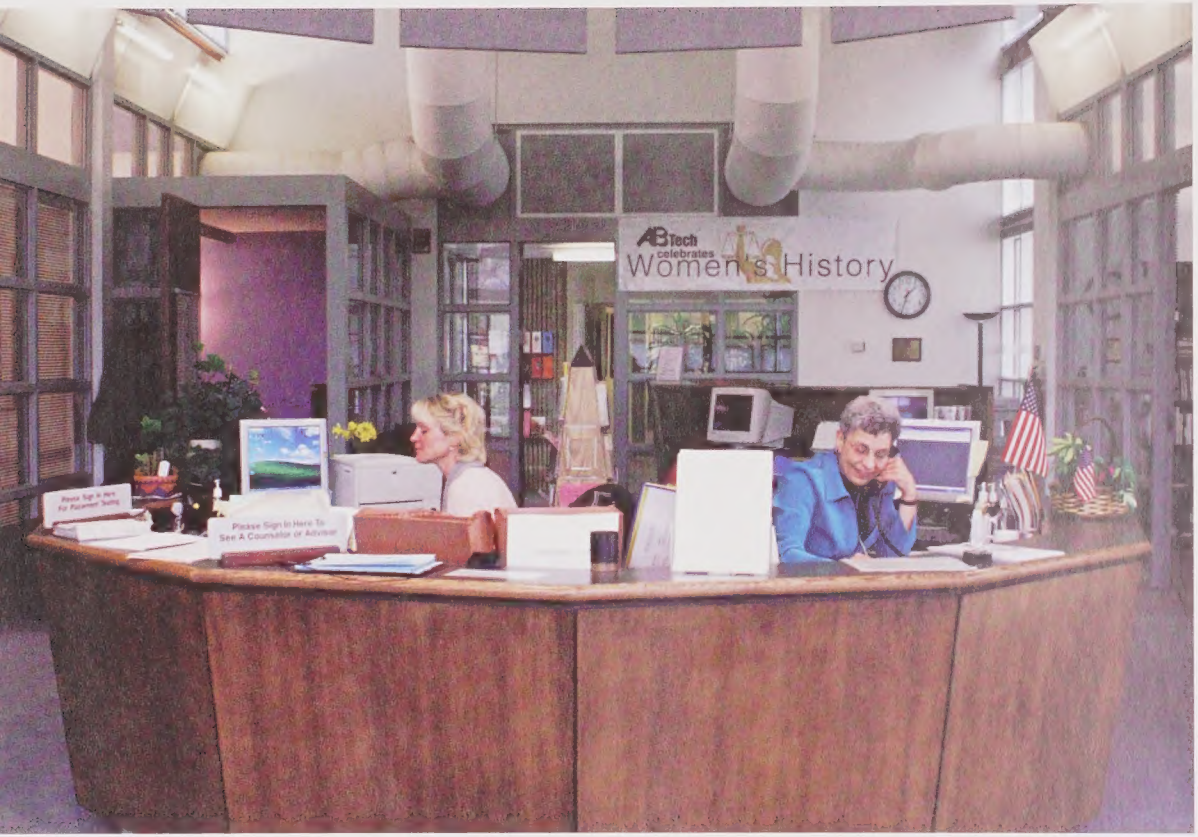
of going beyond. But we embrace them and give them such support that they gain confidence and realize they *can* do this," she says. "It is these compelling student stories that give the foundation its passion."

Student-Centered on Campus and in the Community

A shopping mall may seem an unlikely location for a college classroom—especially one with adults learning to speak Spanish. On this late afternoon, instructor Theresa Poorbaugh is wrapping up a session, listening to a student describe his vacation experience in Costa Rica. "Did you go on the zip line?" she asks in English, giving the students a bit of a break, as they've spent the class speaking and practicing Spanish. But Señora Poorbaugh just can't help encouraging the use of the language and sprinkles in a few words she's certain they'll understand, "The zip lines are used so as not to disturb *la tierra*—the ground," she explains.

This Spanish II class is just one of the courses taught at A-B Tech at the Mall. The two-classroom space is as bright and welcoming as the other retail spaces it is nestled between. Opened in September 2006, the facility offers credit and noncredit courses during the day and evening. "We're constantly searching for ways to make education as convenient as possible for busy adults, and A-B Tech at the Mall is one way of doing that," notes Bailey. Asheville resident and student Bruce Steinbicker agrees, and he described his encounter in an opinion piece in the *Asheville Citizen-Times*. "What a wonderful invitation to learning," wrote Steinbicker. "The class has been one of the best experiences I have had in years. It is good to be with a diverse group of students eager to learn. A-B Tech made a very wise decision to take its many offerings to the people at this location. It gives a stronger meaning to the word 'community' in community college." Bailey hopes

As one of the adult basic skills and human resources development programs, English as a Second Language (ESL) gives nonnative students a leg up on reading, speaking, and writing in English. ESL also improves assimilation and job readiness by teaching American culture, history, and life skills.

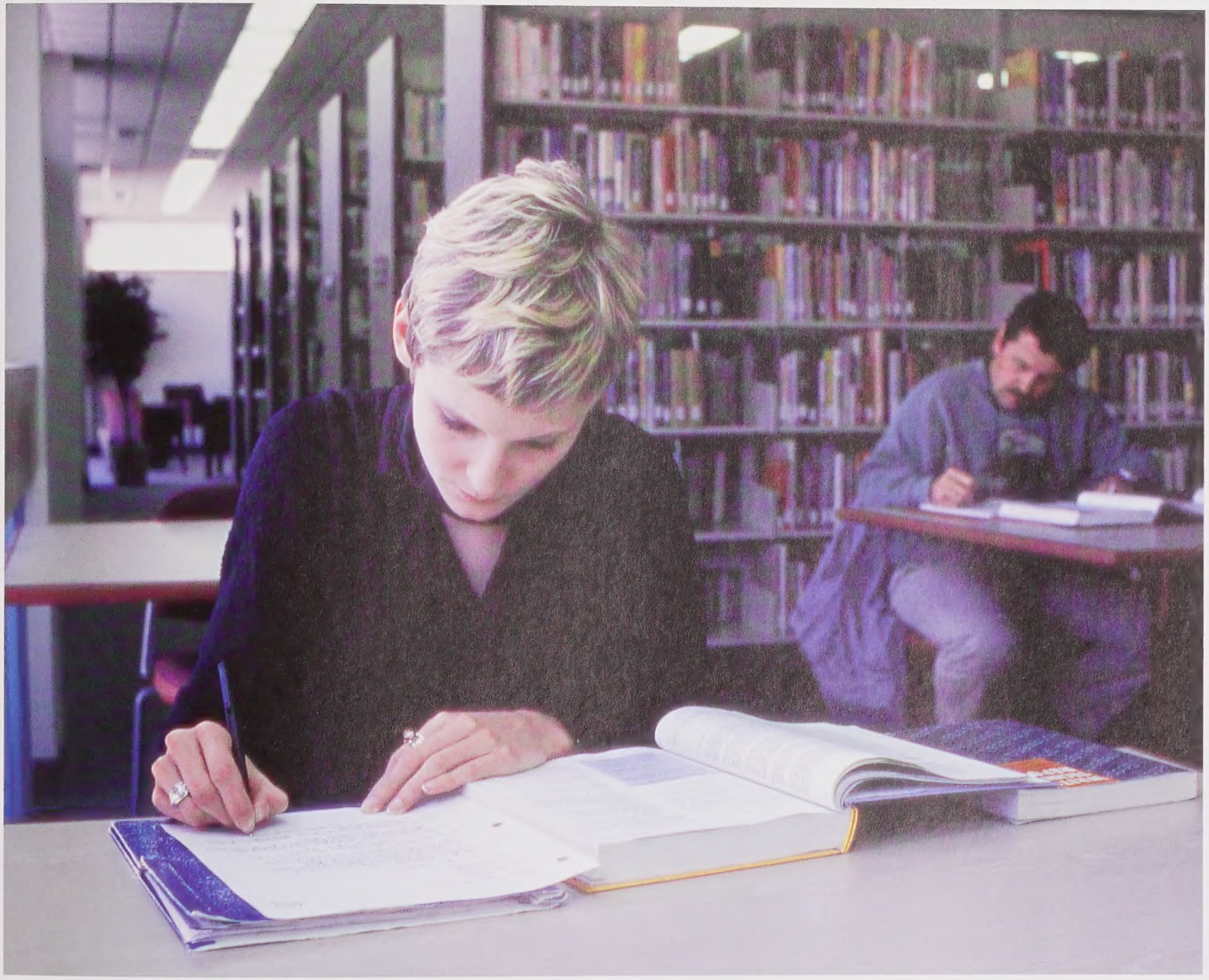


Debby Harmon, Ed.D., director of the counseling center—which is pictured above—firmly believes in community colleges. The first in her rural southern Michigan family to go to college, Harmon notes what many A-B Tech students experience: instructors who change lives. "It is my life's mission to be the mirror that lets students see their potential selves, and A-B Tech allows me to do that every day."

the 11 million people who annually come through the mall will also appreciate its presence.

Convenience is a running theme at A-B Tech, another factor that enhances student success. A new center is the latest effort to simplify logistics so students can concentrate on learning. In the past, they had to go through admission, assessment testing, academic advisement/scheduling, financial aid (if required), buying textbooks, and paying tuition and fees in buildings spread about campus. From the mid-1990s on, the college has tried to bring most of these services into the Azalea Building. A physical addition to Azalea will bring all intake services under one roof. "It's an environment that will enable students to do what they need to do, which is to focus on their education," explains Dennis King, vice president of student services. "In my thirty-year career in higher education, I've never seen an institution more interested in being student-centered than this one," he adds.

Back on the Asheville campus, as the sun begins to drop behind the mountains, Ray Bailey is back at his desk, telling a visitor another one of his favorite stories. "We are changing people's lives every day," he beams. "Isn't it wonderful to hear about all these successful graduates?" He begins to tell the story of Sarah Schober, a troubled teen with a young baby. Sarah's family did what they thought they should do to prevent her from continuing down a risky path, and they petitioned the court to have her removed from their own home and placed in a group foster home. Although she made some progress while at the home, her high school equivalency diploma would only take her so far. Something inside made Sarah dig deeper for a more secure future. With eyes wide open, Sarah found A-B Tech the same way many others had. Laid off from her position as a delivery driver for an office supply store, she realized that without a college education she had no hope for a better life. The new biotechnology program piqued her interest. She enrolled, and



While technology has broadened the ways in which students access reference materials, a college's library remains the hub for the institution. The Holly Library offers a comfortable place to study, as well as a reservoir of vital information and helpful staff. It has wireless Internet, holds 50,000 volumes, subscribes to 275 periodicals, and provides access to several hundred databases. Part of the Learning Resources Division, it has 50 computer research stations, as well as listening stations.

she flourished. "Sarah says she would've laughed in disbelief if I had told her so many years ago that she would be the speaker for our summer 2006 commencement ceremony," said Bailey. Sarah, in fact, earned three degrees from A-B Tech—an associate's in arts, an associate's in science, and an associate's in biotechnology—and continued her education in cell and molecular biology at UNC-Asheville. "She works, goes to school, home-schools three children, and maintains outstanding grades," says Bailey. "To see what we're doing for people, well, it just makes us want to do more."

With Bailey's retirement after 41 years of service to the college, another era closes, but the imprint of the three presidents of A-B Tech will have an unending presence in the lives of this community. Philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man." Presidents Simpson, Haynes, and Bailey were men with one mission who cast giant shadows, whose missions were to change lives. In so doing, they also cast shadows of goodwill for the betterment of the community. Just as the sun will rise over the mountains for another day, and the cars will once again stream along Victoria Road, moving their passengers closer toward their dreams, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College will welcome them, teach them, and lead them to turn "what if" into "what will be."

The college transfer program, instituted in 1989, provides an economical alternative to the more costly tuition at four-year schools.

Appendix

Trustees and Years of Service

	Appointed	End of Service
John Barnes *	9-30-63	11-5-73
Joseph E. Belton *	9-30-63	2-20-71
Coke Candler *	9-30-63	5-1-72
J. Herbert Coman	9-30-63	6-30-02
Named Trustee Emeritus	8-5-02	
J. Gerald Cowan *	9-30-63	11-5-73
John M. Reynolds *	9-30-63	8-4-69
W. W. Shope *	9-30-63	2-22-73
L. F. Zerfoss *	9-30-63	8-2-71
William Dillard *	1-20-64	2-5-68
John Giezentanner **	1-20-64	11-20-70
Paul Markwood *	1-20-64	1-26-65
Ernest A. Mills *	1-20-64	5-2-83
William M. Morgan *	4-23-65	5-2-77

	Appointed	End of Service
John Erichson	2-3-69	8-2-71
	2-4-74	5-7-79
	9-14-81	5-7-90
Gordon H. Greenwood **	11-3-69	2-16-97
Jack Cox	2-4-71	11-3-80
Howard K. Harrison **	11-1-71	8-4-75
Herbert L. Hyde *	11-1-71	5-2-77
Richard A. Wood Jr.	11-1-71	6-30-87
Joe B. Roberson	11-6-72	Present
Dave L. Robinson	4-12-73	6-30-95
Edwin L. Higgins *	2-4-74	6-30-81
Elizabeth Harper	9-17-75	Present
Bruce Mullin §	7-1-77	4-29-85
W. P. Griffin	11-7-77	6-30-96

	Appointed	End of Service
Zeb Sheppard *	7-1-79	8-6-96
Talmage Penland	9-14-81	Present
J. Ray Elingburg	7-25-83	6-30-02
Virginia C. Taylor *	11-4-85	6-30-93
Dershie McDevitt §	8-3-87	3-1-95
J. Owen Tilson **	10-5-89	6-30-96
	7-1-00	8-23-06
Reese Steen	11-6-89	6-30-93
Thomas F. Dabney	8-6-90	6-30-94
Robert Edwards	7-1-93	Present
William A. Hart	7-1-93	Present
Harvey L. Haynes	7-1-94	Present
Kaye Myers	7-1-95	Present
Ray Spells	7-1-95	Present

	Appointed	End of Service
Emerson English	7-1-96	6-30-00
Richard B. Hurley	7-1-96	Present
Steve Metcalf §	8-6-96	2-19-03
G. Gordon Greenwood	7-1-97	6-30-01
Carol Peterson	7-1-01	Present
Mandy Stone	7-1-02	Present
Doris Giezentanner	3-18-03	Present
David Wyatt	7-1-03	Present
Mary Ruth Fowler	12-1-06	Present

* Deceased

** Died while serving

§ Resigned

Served as Chair

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College Foundation, Inc.
Board of Directors

K. Ray Bailey
Louis Bissette
Joe Brumit
James Coman Jr.
Kay Crews
Julie Damore
Jerome Dave
Jack R. Ferguson
Charles Haltiwanger
Neal Hanks Jr.
Darryl Hart
Richard B. Hurley
Harry Jackson
Adelaide Key
Karl N. Koon
Mike Kryzanek
Craig Madison
Russell M. Martin
Richard Mauney
Ken Maxwell
Nancy B. Miller
Sabrina Miller
William Murdock
Aleta Roberson
Bob Roberts
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Robby Russell
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Jo Ann Crompton
Marlene Roden

STAFF
Libby Hodan
Tamma Moriarty
Kathleen Walsh

President's Award

1992
Gordon H. Greenwood

1996
J. Herbert Coman

1998
Talmage Penland

2003
Joe B. Roberson Sr.

2007
Richard Hurley

Outstanding Employees of the Year

FACULTY

1986
James Hagan

1987
Ned Fowler

1988
Robert Werth

1989
Hamilton Gregory

1990
Kathryn P. Daughton

1991
Joseph W. Franklin

1993
Kathy S. Toler

1994
Sharon Metcalfe

1995
Sheila Tillman

1996
Teresa Kennedy

1997
David Holcombe

1999
Brian McDonald

2000
Pamela Silvers

2001
Karen M. Baker

2002
Kelly Randolph

2003
Sherry Shields

2004
Heather K. Vaughn

2005
Christy Andrews

2006
Ron Layne

2007
Carol Hutchinson

ADJUNCT FACULTY

1994
Wanda Love

1995
Pamela J. Brown

1996
Steven Johnson

1997
Jodee Sellers

1999
Judith Robinson

2000
Heather K. Vaughn

2001
Kenet M. Adamson

2002
Rock Doddridge

2003
Lorraine Silverman

2004
Chrystal Cook

2005
Veronica Dooly

2006
Ron Ferrigno

2007
Alec Fehl

Outstanding Employees of the Year (continued)

STAFF MEMBERS

1992

Mary Louise Carpenter

1994

Deborah L. Harmon

1995

Mary Alice Church-Steurer

1996

Faye P. Muse

1997

Anne Plant

1998

Patricia Lail

1999

Nancy Markhoff

2000

Diane Hall

2001

Merion Presha

2002

Martha McLean

2003

Skye Myrick

2004

Deborah Lonon

2005

Marty Rice

2006

Kathryn A. Lemieux

CONTINUING EDUCATION INSTRUCTORS

2006

Sara Hill

Retirees

1971
Robert Barnes
Helen Bowers

1972
Evie Brown

1973
N. Eugene Goode
James Hurley
Donald Robinson
Tyrus West

1976
Ruth Digges
Ruth Geddings

1977
B. Steven Creasman
John Woody

1978
Albert Awald

1979
John Bolhuis
W. Carmel Roberts

1980
Margaret Fortune
Jewel McDaniel

1981
Estelle Nowicki

1982
Russell Allen
Charles Wilson

1983
J. B. Edwards
Willa Bella Rowe

1984
William A. Dickinson
Robert H. Israel

1985
Brewster C. Adams
Katie C. Davis
Paul E. Keicher
Jordan Maynard
Robert Parker

1986
Jay Canter
Jo Marguerite Graybeal
Frances N. Johnson

1987
Marie Farley

1988
A. Thomas Hansen
Virginia C. Kirkland
Robert E. Morrell
Eileen F. Rowe

1989
Willie Shivers
Robert H. Swan

1990
Kathryn Daughton
Bobby Freeman
Burney Gardner
Harvey L. Haynes
Gedwin Morgan

1991
Rex B. Blakeney
W. Perry Fisher
Jane G. Smith

1992
Doris Cunningham
Katie C. Davis
Charles Noblitt
Marie Pinner
Stans C. Sluder
Bernard Smith
Jean Stines

Retirees (continued)

1993

Elizabeth Haney
Paul Hensley
J. Cecil McCurry
Joyce J. Parris
Ray Sawyer
Richard White

1994

Garnet M. Pace
Juanita R. Sluder
Lowell Smith
Robert G. Werth

1995

Robert Creasman
W. J. Davis
Maxie B. Welch

1996

Kenneth W. Driver
Thomas E. Gaffigan
Jessie P. Goforth
Rebecca Murray
D. Harold Ponder
Ellen H. Price
Toby R. Shook
Ronald B. Sluder
Donald G. Young

1997

Mary Louise Carpenter
Jack C. Chason
Richard D. Croom
Robert W. Holmes
Paul Rout

1998

Albert A. Freeman
Hamilton Gregory
Shirley A. Gregory
Carolyn C. Hadaway
Don H. Lovelace
Carolyn H. May

1999

Betty Finnegan
Ann Holderman
Barbara L. Smith

2000

Jean M. Clayton
Marie L. Cochrane
James A. Hagan
Celia H. Miles
James R. Tweed Jr.
Sherman Young

2001

William L. Collins
Mary Joan Ferrell
Barry Landsberg
Ilka B. McDowell
Irvin Ruff
Eileen Williams
David F. Wolfe
Olin R. Wood

2002

Glenn T. Anderson
Nolan Darnell
Carol Mull
James H. Rhea

Employees Who Died While Serving

2003
Clarence F. Allison
Charles P. Branch
Esther A. Chandler
Billy W. Haney
Jim Hornaday
Max V. Hutchins
Grover C. Morton
Leslie F. Walker
David L. Warren
Laura S. West

2004
John Draughon
Faye P. Muse
Anne J. Plant
Harry D. Ponder
Joyce Robertson
Derick Tickle

2005
Rebecca Davis
Bob Hixson
Fran McDonald
Shirley McLaughlin
Clinton Smoke
Lewis Stevens
Sherry Thompson

2006
Catherine Noblitt

2007
K. Ray Bailey
Jo Ann Crompton
Lee Schleining
Marilyn Schmid

1971
Lyman Brown

1975
Thomas W. Simpson

1977
John A. Davidson

1984
Bonnie Saylor

1987
Michael Holcombe

1989
Frederick Johnsson

1992
Henry Dawkins

1994
Metta Buckner
Iona McCurry

1995
Sara Morris
Larry Riddle

1997
Arleen Bryan
Whit New Jr.

1999
Margaret A. Shope

2002
Mary Hay Gwynn

2003
Robert F. Haines

2004
Gail Haverly
Arnold Gaines

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new chapters in their own lives, of instructors who saw each individual as a blank page ready to be scribed with potential, of communities and businesses that grew more successful by joining with a willing partner. The A-B Tech story is one of extraordinary people who embraced the vision and made it a reality.

About the Author

Kimberly Fox DeMeza is an Atlanta-based writer who sees every writing opportunity as a chance to continue to learn. She earned a bachelor's in journalism from the University of Florida, and master's in health management from St. Thomas University.

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